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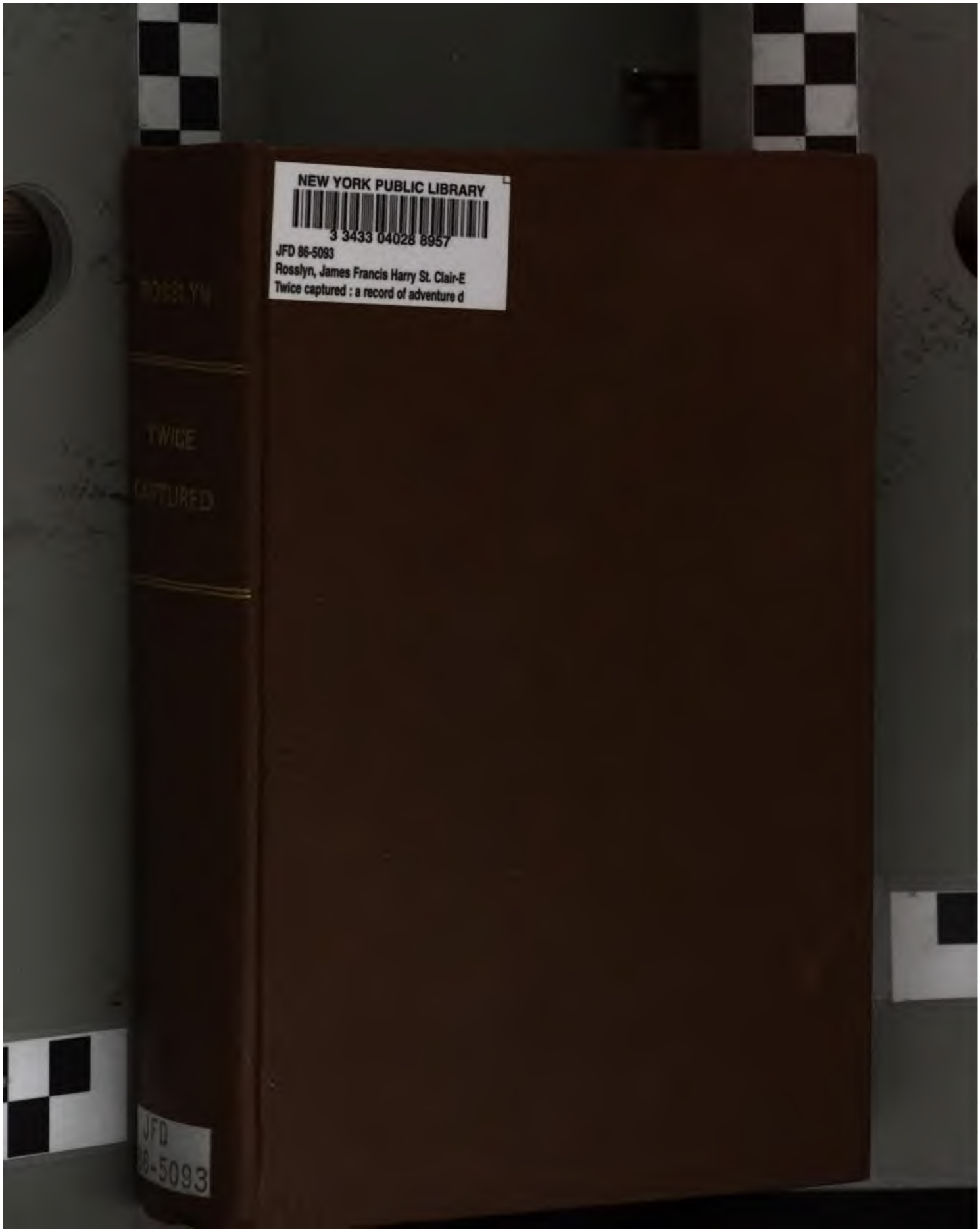
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A RECORD OF ADVENTURE DURING THE BOER WAR

BY

THE EARL OF ROSSLYN

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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INTRODUCTION.

In my capacity as roving Correspondent to the 'Daily Mail' and 'Sphere' during the Boer war, my readers will find in this narrative not a heavy continuous account of the doings of any individual column which fought its way to Pretoria, but a light, and I hope bright and interesting, tale of my personal adventures in South Africa. I have ventured to publish this book from a feeling that my experiences have been almost unique. Not only was I present at the battle of Pieters Hill and the subsequent relief of Ladysmith in a soldier's capacity, but having crossed Basutoland by a hitherto almost untravelled track, I got through the Boer lines near Thaba Nchu, was taken prisoner at Dewetsdorf, escaped from my Boer guards, and was recap-

tured at the Reddersburg disaster, into which battle I unwittingly drove, and where I was fired on by both the British and Boer troops! My enforced journey to Pretoria, culminating in nine weeks' imprisonment, gave me an insight into the manners and methods of the Boers second to none. I also had the opportunity afforded me of being confined in all the three different prisons! Moreover, my last week in Pretoria, when the famous if premature telegram was sent, and my subsequent journey to Bloemfontein during the time De Wet was cutting the lines of communication, form by no means the least interesting items in an eventful six months' campaign.

There is at least a feeling of triumph that as I write this Introduction several prognostications have been justified by their fulfilment.

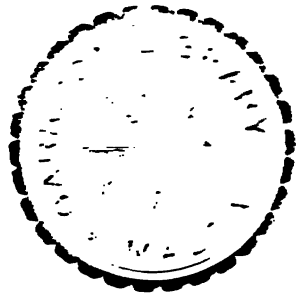
What criticisms I have made in the last chapters may be read with the assurance that the unbiassed opinion of an individual may be of material assistance in the future. My only regret is that the hand may fail to describe what the mind would fain have it write, and

I trust that this narrative will be looked on not as the efflux of a clever pen, but in the light of a true and descriptive account of my personal adventures and experiences.

I have dedicated my book to Mr J. Leigh Wood as a mark of appreciation for a brave strong man who, through the greatest difficulty and danger, when Manager of the Natal Bank, Pretoria, won the universal esteem of both officers and men for the good work he did in the amelioration of their condition in prison. As a personal friend I could wish for no better, and I trust the burden of his labours will not be overlooked. As for the wreath which surrounds the Dedication, it was a present to me when I started. If dead and withered now, it still remains evergreen in my memory, and its motto, towards which I have been trying to climb during my years of endeavour to kill the past in the interests of the future, will ever be gratefully cherished.

ROSSLYN.

August 1900.



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CHAPTER I.

OFF TO SOUTH AFRICA.

PARTING—MY FRIEND AND I—AT SOUTHAMPTON DOCKS—GOOD-BYE—THE C.I.V.—ABOUT SOME PASSENGERS—MADEIRA.

Jan. 13.—The special train left Waterloo at eleven. It always does on Saturdays, and still more, it always leaves a lot of little things behind it. I don't mean handbags or rugs; no! they are too assiduously watched by the well-tipped porter and stout policeman; but it leaves some one—often more than one—waving a little bit of white handkerchief, which occasionally ceases flagging its valedictory signal to be applied to the brave smiling face over which hot tears of anguish are cours-

ing. You may be a good man or you may be a bad, but there is always somebody foolish enough to be fond of you; and the knowledge of the impending danger you are going to confront in that far-away country forces from you, for at least one moment in your life, a feeling of gratitude that you can love and are loved in return. But the joy of going to join our soldiers at the front, and the expectation and thrill which fresh scenes must ever bring to a man who is travelling for the first time, soon make him forgetful, and by the time the special dashes headlong through Winchester station he has thrown off the cloak of silent thought, and is beginning to sort his parcels and preparing to go on board.

At least so it was with me when my friend Murray Gourlay and I started on our way to South Africa on January 13. I was going out as a servant of the 'Daily Mail' and 'Sphere,' armed with pencil and camera, instead of going, as I had originally hoped and intended, with the Imperial Yeomanry. Gourlay comes as my right-hand man, for he knows South Africa; and whether useful with the camera or not, he

will at any rate be what he has always been —a friend and cautious adviser. The reason why I forsook the sword for the pen may be attributed, in the first instance, to the action of my late colonel, Sir John Gilmour; and secondly, to my feeling that it would be a long time before the Yeomanry ever reached the front, of such magnitude was the chaos which prevailed between Pall Mall and Suffolk Street, and between Suffolk Street and Edinburgh. So, thirsting as I was to see "war," I accepted Mr Harmsworth's offer to go where I could. I certainly am starting with much diffidence and doubt as to whether I shall ever reach the front, owing to the limited number of licences the War Office have issued, and my late arrival upon the scene. I have, however, a pleasant little duty to perform at Cape Town in the organisation of the Absent-minded Beggar Relief Fund for the benefit of our home-coming wounded soldiers. That will keep me busy for at least a week if I carry out faithfully the instructions I have received.

The train drew up alongside the quay where the Union Liner Briton was moored, disclosing

a scene of unusual activity and excitement. We were to travel with the City Imperial Volunteers. There they were, sure enough, still embarking on the great ship which was to introduce them to the first hardships of real warfare for which they had so gallantly tendered their services in the cause of Queen and country. Mixing with them as they went on board was a crowd of friends and relations; and the Lord Mayor of London himself had done them the honour of a last official visit.

A telegraph clerk handed me a bundle of telegrams, and I elbowed my way to my cabin through the surging crowd to see who they were who had remembered me at the last moment, and to wire a few "good-byes" to those I had had no opportunity of expressing them to personally. I came up again, and immediately the scene I had left behind at Waterloo forced itself once more into my view. What I had suffered then, hundreds were suffering now! The bell to clear the decks of visitors rang once, rang twice, rang even a third time before it could dismiss its sobbing and reluctant guests. Poor

souls! I felt for them: mothers, sisters, cousins, aunts — ay, even sweethearts. I lingered by the ship's gangway and watched the last farewells — the band struck up the well-known tunes—cheer after cheer was raised—the last mail-bag was on board—the hawsers were cast loose — a girl seemed to totter in the crowd, then fell—"God save the Queen" burst from a thousand throats, — and the last I can remember, through tears which would not be repressed, was a sea of white handkerchiefs waving God-speed to the City heroes as the mighty liner turned her stern to the now darkening shore.

Jan. 17.—We have reached Madeira after a fast passage, but not without the usual discomfort the Bay of Biscay has a knack of supplying. Certainly it was not rough, and still more certainly it was not smooth. The poor C.I.V. felt the discomfort more than we did. Treated, as they would naturally wish to be, like the regular "Thomas Atkins," their quarters were in that part of the ship astern usually allotted to steerage passengers; and what with the racing of the screw

beneath them, the knocking of the helm's gear above them, and the closeness of their cramped quarters, it was no surprise to find them, when they were not stretched about on the decks in the fresh air, suffering from sea-sickness down below. But they have quite got over it, and seem to enjoy the novelty of peeling potatoes, fetching the dinners, and acting sentry on various parts of the ship. A splendid lot of fellows they are, nearly all men of position and earning good incomes, most of them crack rifle-shots, and each imbued with the one desire to distinguish himself on the field of battle. We have only got the Mounted Infantry portion on board. Colonel Cholmondeley commands them, and has with him Captains Bell (adjutant), Reid, Waterlow, and Lieutenants C. Wilson, Manisty, Moller, Berry, and Ridler (quartermaster). It is a pleasure to see the courtesy of the officers to their men, and the smart discipline of the latter towards their superiors. They are sure to do well. If they don't, it won't be for lack of exercise; for they "double" round the boat-deck for

CAPTAIN [redacted]
Adjutant [redacted]

THE VAULTING-HORSE ON BOARD THE BRITO

hours every day, do plenty of physical drill, and are learning to mount and dismount on a vaulting-horse which is on board for the purpose. Among them I found a friend in R. P. Lewis, the old Oxford wicket-keeper.

To turn to ourselves, we are a curious gathering, and beyond the officers of the C.I.V., who, with Mrs Bell, the adjutant's wife, mess at one table, I have so far only made the acquaintance of those at my own, which includes Algy Lennox, anxious for some appointment, Murray Gourlay, Cecil Leigh, also in search of a job, and two ladies—one of whom has appeared for a minute, only to rush away again to her cabin, while the other bids fair to be a source of interest on the voyage. She is not pretty—she is as yet not very talkative. She says she is a nurse—and has been to Klondike. Other people say she is a Boer spy! Captain Griffin, R.N., at whose table we sit, is an old Navy Reserve man, and gives us plenty of information on how he took the troops to Suakim (presumably) and how he won the Egyptian Experience! He and his

officers are assiduous in their attentions, especially the "chief," whose first voyage it is on the Briton. Meanwhile a shouting, chattering crowd is at the ship's side, and I must go and have a look at Madeira before I close this letter. It is six in the morning, and we sail at ten.

I am finishing this at the Santa Clara Hotel, sitting on a verandah which overlooks this quaint little Portuguese settlement. Beneath me the Briton lies coaling in the bay, and round about me are masses of bright bougainvillea creepers and scarlet geranium. A heavy mist hangs over the hills at the back of the town, obscuring what must, on a fine day, be a heavenly bit of scenery. The town itself is curiously devoid of interest, at any rate to the casual wait-an-hour visitor, but the usual foreign beggar is in evidence at every street corner. Streets! What a term for these miserably narrow, slippery, cobbled, steep alleys! I wonder at such a dirty little place being considered a health resort; but for quaintness it certainly is worth a peep, and reminds me somewhat of Ajaccio, which I visited some years

ago. The funny little castle, used as a fort, is made all the funnier by its tiny guards, whose very rifles seem to dwarf their pigmy stature. Little, covered, box-shaped, wheelless carts, drawn by tiny bullocks, provide the general means of conveyance. But as it is time I was off, I will not weary you with a well-worn subject, but only leave behind me a sigh of regret at having to tear myself from the lovely flowers which alone give an air of contentment to this relaxing little town of Funchal. *Adios!*

CHAPTER II.

ON BOARD THE BRITON.

BABBLING PORTUGUESE—THE C.I.V. AND THEIR PRESTIGE—THE C.I.V. AT DINNER — INOCULATION — COLOUR-SERGEANT GIBBONS—WHERE THE FLYING-FISHES PLAY—PUGNACIOUS PASSENGERS—SUNDAY ON BOARD—SOMETHING MORE ABOUT THE C.I.V. — ACROSS THE LINE — DEATH AMONGST US — ASCENSION ISLAND — ATHLETIC SPORTS — EXCITEMENT — A DINNER-PARTY—GENERAL WAVELL—FANCY-DRESS BALL—THE LONDON SCOTTISH CONTINGENT—SMOKING CONCERT—TIPPING CARRIED TOO FAR—TYPES OF HUMANITY.

Jan. 18.—The row back from the pier to the Briton was not so easily accomplished, as a strongish head-wind had got up, and the Portuguese boatmen, in rather clumsy boats, had greedily taken on board a somewhat larger cargo of human freight than they were able to pull across the bay. A passing tug was chartered and three boatloads made fast to her, and so

A BULLOCK-CART AT MADEIRA.

WITH THE C.I.V. ON THE BRITON.
"Fetching the Dinners."

we accomplished a none too dry journey. I never knew such bathers as these Portuguese are, and the noise they made round the ship in their flotilla of small boats reminded me of the monkey-house at the Zoo.

We were slightly delayed by the late arrival from shore of some of our Tommies and to show the keen desire they have to do their utmost to maintain the prestige of their corps and to earn the *sobriquet* of "soldier" in the truest sense of the word the following incident may be recorded. One boatload contained a sergeant and seven men of one of our best-known Scottish regiments, and on being hailed for the mails by their officer for overstaying their leave the incident would have ended as the latter was quite prepared to accept the explanation that it was not their fault but that of the wind and Portuguese boatmen. However, shortly before mess, a letter was received by the commanding officer from the sergeant taking the whole blame for his men on his own shoulders, expressing his deepest regret, and offering to resign his stripes as a mark

of his humility and desire to show the true military spirit. Needless to say the matter has been forgotten. We are running through a strong E.S.E. wind with a bright warm sun, but have so far found no reason to change the warm clothing we started in, though greatcoats have been discarded. We passed Teneriffe during the night, so I can tell you nothing about it, and we shall be off Cape Verde to-morrow. I have had a trial of field-glasses, and by general consensus the Zeiss glass is considered superior, but Ross has supplied some one on board with a very good instrument. I hear of a kind present from the officers of the 3rd Middlesex Artillery, who insured the lives of all their men who were accepted for foreign service for a nice little round sum — an example which might easily be followed by many other Volunteer and Yeomanry regiments who may also have large county funds at their disposal.

I have just come up from seeing the men at dinner—a most amusing spectacle. Soup, roast lamb, and potatoes, followed by a pudding suspiciously like plum-duff! The men have to buy their drinks, and lemonade,

ginger-beer, and beer seem to be equal favourites. Whilst I was there the orderly officer and his sergeant came round, and every one sprang to attention, to be immediately allowed to go on with their dinners. There were no complaints; and at the end of each table was the mess orderly for the day carving the meat and doling out the potatoes and pudding. I heard one say to a man evidently famous for his appetite, "Have another go, Bob?" "Yes, please," was the reply. "Then you can't," was the answer, "as there's none left, and you've had two 'go's' already!" and there followed a general laugh from the messmates. "Come to the kitchen" was sounded on the bugle as I was looking on, and away rushed the mess orderlies with the nearest available tin for the pudding. One had apparently not heard the call, and his omission was at once noticed by his pal. "Hi, hi, Jim! what are you doing? Pudding, Jim, pudding!" and off went the delinquent to the kitchen, to the evident satisfaction of his table companions.

Jan. 21.—We are in the tropics at last, and

our cool fine weather changed so suddenly yesterday afternoon that there was a general rush for the shady corners and an immediate display of the most summery garments. Still, if it gets no hotter I shall be agreeably disappointed, as I had anticipated an almost unbearable heat, instead of a light breeze from the Gambian coast, which is causing a gentle ripple on the sea as I write.

To begin with, as I know the doings of the City Imperial Volunteers will interest you most, the majority of officers and men have been inoculated against enteric fever. I had had ugly versions of this anti-fever remedy given me before I left home, and had also heard of the failure of the "cure" in one instance, so I decided to leave it alone, especially as a doctor told me the operation was not only painful but likely to make me seriously ill for at least three days. It was with a feeling of some curiosity, therefore, and not a little anxiety, that I went to see the ship's doctor commence operations on the officers and men. Of the former, Colonel Cholmondeley, Captain Bell, Captain Reid, and Quartermaster Ridler

are not going to avail themselves of the preventive, and possibly Lieut. Manisty will climb down from his present intentions; but the other officers and 80 per cent of the men came forward and were inoculated. The operation itself seemed extremely trivial and practically painless, the insertion of a subcutaneous syringe in the groin being performed in a second; nor have the after-effects proved nearly so serious as I had expected. The lymph began to take effect within two or three hours, and the first symptoms were the inflammation of the place punctured and a great stiffness, beginning in the lower limbs and moving gradually upwards till in some cases the men could not move their arms. Drowsiness and a feeling of sickness soon supervened, but as quickly passed away, and the chief discomfort was a swelling of all the glands of the body. The men are getting over it, and to-day (two days after the operation) are practically well again. I hear Lieut. Berry was lightheaded at night, and Lieut. Wilson also suffered considerably, but both are about and well now.

As I am talking about sickness, I am sorry

to record a serious case. Colour-Sergeant Gibbons of the Inns of Court section is dangerously ill with double pneumonia, and has been moved into a first-class cabin for greater comfort. As I write he is doing very well, but I fear it will be a long time before his services are available. His is a hard case. He was desperately keen to go out, and held a commission, which, being unselected, he resigned and then enlisted. He was subsequently given the rank of colour-sergeant.

We are racing through the sea at sixteen knots, and my mind has been momentarily diverted from my Diary by watching the flying-fish as they dart away in all directions, terrified at the approach of the big steamer. They are quite the prettiest little animals I have seen, with their green bodies and silvery wings, now flying, now plunging, now flying again, and they remind me of coveys of partridges early in the season rising from some field of clover, to drop again a few hundred yards away. Truly we might have had a good day's sport to-day, but I am afraid, at the pace we are going, the pick-up would have been nil!

We are not quite alone in this great expanse of ocean, as the nautili, or, as they are nicknamed, Portuguese men-of-war, are spreading their pink, shell-like sails before the breeze, as if to signal us a welcome to Delagoa Bay; or maybe they are on the look-out for contraband of war, of which we have plenty on board! *Revenons à nos moutons!*

The usual desire was expressed to have a concert and sports, so it was necessary to call a meeting of the first-class passengers with the captain's consent. This was done on Friday, and it was soon apparent that even on board ship there can be a demonstrative and fractious opposition, which reminded some of us as being strangely similar to the Irish Party in Parliament. The captain had expressed a wish that the committee should consist solely of first-class passengers—with power to invite competitors for the sports and artistes for the concert from other parts of the ship. He had had previous experience of a breach of privilege by other passengers coming to the first-class deck by reason of their being allowed there during the holding of the sports. On board ship a captain's

wish is law, but a group who have stuck very closely to one another throughout the voyage clamoured for the representation of the second-class saloon passengers on the committee. In vain was the captain's wish urged by General Wavell, who had been elected chairman of the committee. It was no use. The question had to be put! The result was an overwhelming vote of confidence in favour of the captain's authority, which would have been still larger but for Lieut. Wilson's arrival to champion the representation of the non-commissioned officers and men on the committee! Mr C. Wilson is an admirable representative of his father, the member for Hull. Impervious to the argument that four officers of the C.I.V. had been placed on the committee, he argued that the men's interests were not properly safeguarded. Poor men! but he has since been so well chaffed by us all that I shall say no more about him. The result of the vote not only led to the refusal of the clique to subscribe to the prize fund, but was also carried to the second-class saloon, and intense friction was at once apparent. However, all's well that ends well. The committee,

after having been formed, allowed me, with the captain's consent, to use a little diplomacy, and not only have the second-class saloon passengers joined in, but they are represented on the committee, have offered some very interesting Jubilee medals for a tug-of-war prize, have subscribed largely to the fund, and have appeased the intense wrath of the "Opposition," and caused them also to open their purses! The concert takes place to-morrow night and the sports on Tuesday: both these events are open to the ship, and we shall have fully £70 in prize-money. We have also organised a tournament at indoor games and quoits which will be confined to the first-class passengers—so, as I am secretary, my work is cut out for the next week, when I hope we shall be in sight of Cape Town. I have seen no land since Madeira, as we passed Cape Verde and Teneriffe in the dark, though some passenger was bold enough to say he had seen the snow-clad peak of the latter about 6 A.M. far astern. As we passed Cape Verde we found a quantity of sand on the decks, and I hear it is not at all unusual for ships to be covered with it even at a farther

distance than the ten miles at which we passed, especially if a strong east wind is blowing. Last night we had an impromptu dance: the ship's band is none too lively nor tuneful, but we had a gay set of lancers, and one or two of us danced a waltz and polka. The fact is, there are very few ladies on board to make such an entertainment "go," but the second-class passengers are better off in this respect, and have more ladies than men. I got my porthole open yesterday for the first time, and a wind-scoop out. Previous efforts to obtain a little fresh air had resulted in the sousing of my clothes, books, &c. It is a great comfort, and this calm sea and soft breeze are quite delicious.

To-day we have had a very interesting service—just the usual Morning Prayer, Psalms, Lessons, and Hymns; and as many of the Volunteers as could be accommodated joined in the church parade. The ship's officers were all in their white uniforms, as were the crew and stewards, and these were all paraded and the roll called before the service began. Yesterday there was a fire drill, the alarm being sounded at 4 P.M., and the men all turned out to their

PLAYING QUOITS.

Captain Reid, C.I.V.M.I. Captain Bell, C.I.V.

"GETTING FIT" ON BOARD THE BRITON.

respective stations, manned the boats, and set the hose going, while the Volunteers were allotted special posts.

I have not much more to tell you about the Volunteers. They have sent in very large entries for the sports and concert, and are sure to acquit themselves well. They have been drilling in bare feet to get them hardened, and occasionally with their new boots to get *them* softened. They are learning with the vaulting horse how to mount and dismount, are doing musketry and physical drill, and any amount of work "at the double." All are as cheery and happy as possible. It is getting hotter and hotter, and the thermometer is registering 85° Fahrenheit at 5 P.M.!

Jan. 24.—We are across the line. What progress civilisation is making! and how the manners and customs of our forefathers are changed! I didn't see a gruff old tar rigged out as Neptune, I wasn't asked to pay my footing, I wasn't dipped and half-drowned in a sail bath, nor was a soapy shaving-brush shoved down my throat and my face scraped with a rusty iron! How

lucky for me! And here I am south of the line, which we crossed without bumping about 9 P.M. on Monday night, the 22nd day of January 1900.

The concert has come and gone, and the sports and tournament are in full swing. The weather is as fine as ever, though much cooler, but Death has taken from us poor Gibbons, whose illness I have already mentioned. He died last night (January 23) about 6 P.M., after hope had been given up for at least twenty-four hours. We were at the concert on Monday night, and I had just finished reciting Mrs Arthur Harter's magnificent patriotic poem, "The Women of Britain," when the news was brought that he was dying. The captain immediately cancelled the rest of the programme out of sympathy for his comrades in arms. Mrs Harter's beautiful lines must have forced themselves into the hearts of many, especially these :—

"In the clamour and crash of encounter
There is valour and glory—or Death,
With the dream on their eyes of the woman they prize,
To hallow their last dying breath."

And to the mother whom he leaves sorrowing behind him, the following seem to express the general feeling on board ship:—

"But what for the women of Britain!
Ah, they need our pity the most;
In patience abiding, awaiting some tiding
Of the dear one who dies at his post."

The doctor had got the better of the pleuro-pneumonia when heat apoplexy attacked him. Everything that two doctors and skilled nurses and his own comrades, who took it in turn to act as orderlies by his bedside, could do, was done, but he passed peacefully away after having given a few parting instructions and messages to one of his chums in the Inns of Court section, to which he belonged, and in which he had, as I told you, originally held a commission. The funeral took place this morning on the promenade deck, and was most impressive. The C.I.V. paraded in review order, and the body, covered with a union-jack and borne by six sailors, was preceded by the firing-party, which was selected from all sections, and led by the adjutant. The Dead March was played, Colonel Chol-

mondeley read the beautiful service for those buried at sea, the engines were stopped, the body slipped into its watery grave, three volleys fired, the ship proceeded on its course, and the first military funeral at sea I have witnessed was at an end. The reverence of the ceremony and the sympathy for his friends and relations has cast a gloom over the ship, which can only recall vividly to each of us the words of the service that "In the midst of life we are in death."

It is an interesting coincidence, and may possibly afford consolation to his family, that all that remained mortal of poor Gibbons was buried almost immediately east of the island of Ascension, the smoothest and sunniest spot in South African waters, and where, in Rudyard Kipling's words, "the flying-fishes play." For the moment I can write no more.

We got through the sports yesterday, and brought the unfinished concert to a conclusion in the evening. There are few who have not seen the everyday athletic sports of Britain, but on board ship are many new and amusing events unheard of on dry land. "Thread-

ing the needle," "chalking the pig's eye," and the "egg-and-spoon race" (all for ladies) afforded us endless amusement. In the first instance, a man stands at the turning-point with a cork in which are three needles; to these needles the competitors have to run, and having threaded them carry them back to the starting-point. Chalking the pig's eye gave us evidence that the bandages over the fair competitors' eyes were not tight enough in every instance! A pig is drawn on the deck, and each lady has to be blindfolded, turned round three times, and then made to walk about ten yards to where the pig is, and with a piece of chalk mark where its eye should be. The result is often very amusing. The egg-and-spoon race should always be seen from where the egg lies, as the competitors' often futile attempts to pick the egg up in a spoon give every one the utmost merriment. In the men's sports the most amusing events were the "Military tournament" and "Are you there?" In the first you sit on a spar laid across and about three feet above the deck. You have to balance yourself on this and fight your

adversary, who is similarly placed, with a bolster. The game is to knock him off his perch, as he is not allowed to use his hands to save himself. "Are you there?" created shrieks of laughter. Two competitors are blindfolded and given a rolled paper as a weapon. They lie flat on their faces opposite each other and holding each other's left hand. One says "Are you there?" The other says "Yes," and immediately dodges his head from where he spoke in order to avoid his opponent's blow. The City Imperial Volunteers did very well, and won several prizes. In fact, the sports have been a great success, and helped to relieve the monotony of the voyage.

I am startled as I write by loud cheering from the upper decks, and looking out of my porthole I see a large steamer, evidently a Castle Liner; and now my servant rushes in with the news that she has signalled "Ladysmith relieved." No wonder they cheer! I have run up hurriedly on deck to hear the news, but the ship which gave it us is not a Castle Liner but the Manchester City, which belongs to a new firm. She is evidently a

cattle steamer, and has probably been employed in the transport of mules or horses. Champagne corks are flying, and everywhere there is the greatest jubilation: I doubt not it was the same in old England when the good news was received. Of course our appetite is whetted, and we are keen for details, but we must "bide a wee."

We are now two days exactly from Cape Town, so we have made a fast passage. A strong head-wind from the south-east, generally known as the trade wind, is blowing; but the ship is behaving well. To-night will see the end of our festivities, when the City Imperial Volunteers will give a smoking concert for our benefit, and this afternoon we are going to have a tug-of-war with the ship's crew.

I forgot to tell you of a birthday dinner given by the C.I.V. officers on Thursday night. It was Mr Wilson's birthday, and they invited to their table Mr and Mrs Webber, the ship's doctor, Miss Syfret, General Wavell, and, of course, the adjutant's wife (Mrs Bell) and the colonel. After dinner, at which the fattest of Warter Priory pheasants formed the *pièce de*

résistance, a present and testimonial were given to Mr Wilson. The present consisted of a made-up white tie! and the testimonial took the form of an amusing address signed by his brother officers. After dinner we finished the interrupted concert, and gave away the prizes for the winners at the sports and tournament. The Volunteers (I should now call them "the new regiment") assisted materially in its success, and Private South's comic songs sailed just near enough to the wind to make them delightfully amusing without injuring the susceptibilities of some of our easily shocked companions!

General Wavell kindly gave away the prizes, receiving two himself. Talking of General Wavell reminds me of a short conversation I had with him. He has made this journey some ten times. The first was thirty-five years ago, when he started from Gibraltar with his regiment in a sailing-ship in August, and arrived in December! The last time was in 1870, when he came home in forty days in a 450-ton screw steamer. *Tempora mutantur!* He says they thought it then a very comfortable voyage

ON BOARD THE BRITON.

SOME OF THE BRITON'S PASSENGERS.

Lord Algernon Gordon Lennox. Mr Murray Gourlay.
Mr J. G. Hamilton. Mr Cecil Leigh.
Mr W. H. Bond.

because they knew no better, and the word "progress" had scarcely its two first letters formed.

Last night we had a fancy-dress ball — imagine Covent Garden upon the R.M.S. Briton! — but it was quite a success, and really the ingenuity displayed was marvellous. I could carry myself back to the "Sign of the Cross" when I found a not very good imitation of "Mercia"; we had the Mad Hatter (Mr Byatt) from 'Alice in Wonderland'; a Spanish dancer (Mrs Curtis), who took first prize; the signals "Ladysmith Relieved" reproduced by the flags on a lady's dress; a Red Cross nurse (Mr Scott of the 'Illustrated London News'), which tied for first place among the men with a Sick Soldier (Mr Day); a Parisian beauty in the latest Paris fashion, portrayed by a hotel-keeper in Johannesburg; and all sorts and descriptions of other nationalities were wonderfully reproduced with the meagre assistance which the ship's "properties," in the absence of Clarkson, could afford. I did not join in the competition, but went as "Lady-Smith Relieved."

Needless to say, it was yesterday we heard the news of the relief of Ladysmith.

A section of the London Scottish contingent have won General Wavell's prize for "the best knowledge of Baden-Powell's book on scouting" (a book they all have), and "for the best man on the vaulting-horse and fire discipline." Wherever we go we always find a Scotsman to the front when common-sense is required. The winning section was made up of Privates M'Donnell, Mumford, Burn, and Duncan.

Jan. 29, 10 A.M.—Land ahead on the port bow! So in a very few hours the first stage in my journey to Pretoria will have ended. Yesterday we passed the Gascon a long way off, and on asking her for news, she signalled, "Nothing of any importance"; so speculation is rife as to whether the Manchester City told us the truth about Ladysmith, or whether the news was so stale that the Gascon thought we must already know it. *Nous verrons!*

The Volunteers gave us a splendid smoking-concert on Saturday night, and in Privates Webb, Pursaill, and Murray they have three

magnificent singers to enliven any idle hours they may have in camp at Cape Town, where I shall pay them a visit after they have settled down. We had the usual Sunday service yesterday, and collected about £10 for the National Lifeboat Institution, and the rest of the day was spent letter-writing and settling-up. The voyage has been a very pleasant one, but has given me an insight into the malpractices of "tipping" on board ship. It is really a disgrace that the Union Steamship Company should wink at a system which I am told has been prevalent from time immemorial, and, instead of being suppressed, grows worse and worse. We have a big enough sum to pay for passage-money, but what would you say if the bandmaster came to you as Secretary of the Sports Committee and asked you if you had remembered to set aside a sum of money for the band out of the subscriptions? and what would you say if, after £19 has been handed to them by the generosity of the passengers, the bandmaster remarked it was a very small sum? What would you do if the bathman advertised

his name in each bathroom, adding, "Please don't forget the bathman"? and wouldn't your hair turn grey if you knew the smoking-room steward had a list carried round for subscriptions, and that that subscription sometimes reached the sum of £25 in one voyage? Wouldn't you, too, be inclined to kick the deck steward who, having just received a douceur for his services, walked past you with his hand in his pocket when you remonstrated with him for want of attention? I hardly blame the Company's servants as much as the Company's officials. Surely they should pay their servants sufficiently well to obviate a sum like £45 going into the band's coffers—a sum which I noticed was paid to them on one occasion last year out of the funds collected from the passengers for sports, prizes, &c. Perhaps this will interest the Union Steamship Company's directors. Out of a sum of £71 collected for sports and entertainments, only about £31 was used for prizes and refreshments—the remainder, if I except £10 for charities, going to the band and other stewards. And this was considered a very small sum!

The passage has opened my eyes to the multitudinous variety of character this world produces, and how little one learns if one does not travel. Here on board I have met a type of the hard-worked, ill-paid, and possibly hardened hospital nurse, as contrasted with the nurse who volunteers her services and shows kindliness in everything she does. The storekeeper and bar-tender of South Africa rub shoulders with the representative and partner of the richest mining firms of that country. The bank manager and the commercial traveller hob-nob over the latter's letter of credit. The flirting girl surrounds herself with the idle youth, the latter a journalist, an artist, an adventurer, or a boy who is going (where?—he does not know) in search of employment. The general in the army off to the seat of war consults his maps and discusses the possibilities and probabilities with his A.D.C. The latter in his moments of ease indulges in a rubber of whist, or joins a sober tea-party, composed probably of the quiet, well-to-do Africander and his family who know the country as well as you do Great Britain. The

mother plays with her children in one part of the ship, and in another the type of Polish Jewess is visible, dark-skinned, dark-eyed, speaking to none but her husband, and feeling every movement of the ship, even when there is no wind or wave to rock her. Again, I see a civil service officer on his way to the wilds of Nyassaland, young and keen, who will not be home for three years. The consulting engineer stands near him, and not far away is the partner in a well-known South African racing-stable. Another group is composed of men, one going to fetch home a wounded relative, another to join some irregular force; while dotted about are the officers of the C.I.V.M.I. Truly a motley, yet withal a genial, company, and one in which any man who has a desire "to inquire within" will find plenty to appease his appetite. And in a few hours we shall part to the four winds of heaven, may possibly forget one another, and more probably never meet again. Such is the world, and such is its charm. Variety relieves monotony, and change of scene makes — well, it makes a man!

CHAPTER III.

CAPE TOWN.

NEWS ON ARRIVAL—SOLDIERS AND KAFFIRS—THE C.I.V. DISEMBARK—SIR ALFRED MILNER—MR GEORGE PEEL—THE PRINCESS OF WALES HOSPITAL SHIP—LORD ROBERTS—AT THE MOUNT NELSON HOTEL—MR CHARLES ARNOLD—AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT—FUTURE PROSPECTS.

I FINISHED my previous chapter as the Briton was dropping her anchor in Table Bay, and every one's excitement was intense when the port captain's boat came alongside and a string of questions poured into the ears of the chief officer: "What's the news? How was Ladysmith won? Are there many casualties? Are there any tidings from Kimberley or Mafeking? Where is Roberts? Has Methuen been superseded?" and when the clamour had somewhat subsided, the news that Ladysmith had not

been relieved was succeeded by a breathless silence and a subdued prayer that the Manchester City, which had caused our cheers, our happiness, and our champagne, might go to the bottom of the deep blue sea. Nor was the general feeling alleviated when we learnt from the 'Cape Times' that Buller had been fighting five days and had met with a reverse! Major Lascelles, the disembarkation officer, came out in a tug to bring off General Wavell, and by his courtesy I was permitted to accompany him, as the Briton could not find a berth for at least an hour. My first view of Table Mountain and Sea Point and Green Point (the suburbs of Cape Town) was as good a one as I shall probably ever have; and truly the grandeur of these magnified Salisbury Crags, with the Devil's Peak towering up to the east'ard and the Twelve Apostles forming the western flank of the "Table," were a sight on which I could feast my ignorant eyes and wonder if ever again I should be so thrilled on my arrival in any other foreign land. The bay, usually empty, was crowded with all the finest ships of every line, and when I got inside I saw

CAPETOWN FROM THE MOUNT NELSON HOTEL, SHOWING SIGNAL HILL.

the reason why the Briton had to wait her turn, so full were these enormous docks of stems and sterns, of funnels and of masts. Surely South Africa must feel the weight of Greater Britain's majesty!

But a moment, and I was in a hansom (such an uncomfortable one!), and being twisted and jolted round innumerable quay corners, past horse-boxes, hay-trucks, army service traction-engines, big guns, and ammunition waggons, over the ruttiest and worst of roads, till I turned into St George's Street and found civilisation. Shops I saw—not ordinary "shanties," but buildings to rival some of the best in London,—electric trams (far ahead of London), ranks of cabs, policemen, Malays, Englishmen, foreigners, Dutchmen; and then I was at the office where I hoped to find my chief and my telegrams. But I found neither, though I found a friend in need (it was Mr Charles Hands), who told me Mr Pryor had gone to look for me; and he took me round the corner to Poole's Hotel in Queen Victoria Street, where I learnt that a "tickie" meant threepence, that whisky was Scotch, and that

my new friend was off to fill poor Steevens' place, by whose death the 'Daily Mail' loses one of the cleverest and most popular of her war correspondents. Here, there, and everywhere I saw "soldiers of the Queen," *nearly all* in khaki, but *all* in practically unrecognisable uniform unless I looked at their shoulder-straps. I noticed a red band on a cap and collar which I knew denoted a staff officer, and of these there appeared more than of those who composed the ever-to-be-met fatigue parties. Black faces prevailed; but as I made my way back to the Briton, after engaging rooms at Poole's Hotel (a quiet, inoffensive inn), I noted contentment and happiness on the faces of those who, their labours at the dock at an end, were returning in shoals to some part or other of the town. Some were Kaffirs, some Malays (of which there is a very large population); others looked like Hottentots, and some like Zulus,—but all seemed happy, and all spoke English or what sounded like it. On no face that I saw that afternoon could I bring myself to realise that its owner knew that a great war was in progress within 600

miles of their dwellings. I might have been in England again, so calm and cheerful and callous were they all. It was late in the evening, so I elected to sleep on board that night and say Good-bye to the Volunteers who have afforded me such an amount of interest during the past sixteen days.

I was up early next morning—everybody was up early. Lord Roberts and Sir Howard Vincent had paid an unofficial visit to the ship the previous evening, and the C.I.V. were to disembark,—and disembark they did, and marched to their new camp on Green Point Common. Very well they looked on the quay in their puttees and folded overcoats; and as, headed by one of the most popular colonels, they marched off, they were greeted with rounds of applause and expressions of goodwill. A rearguard was left to take care of the baggage, but by sundown everything there was room for in a somewhat restricted camp had been transferred from the hold of the great Union Liner, and she was left to coal and revictual and make out a practically fresh list of passengers.

My first move this morning was in connection with the Absent-minded Beggar Relief Fund, and, with letters of introduction, I made my way to Government House, where I was immediately received by Sir Alfred Milner. I told him of my errand, and asked his sympathy and advice in my first movements, both of which were cordially extended. He asked me about the Volunteer and Yeomanry arrangements, and what feeling they had excited in England, and if the effort was likely to be successful numerically as well as physically. I told him all I could, but I don't like the subject of the Yeomanry organisation, and I await its result. Still, to-night's paper announces the departure of many shiploads of our British Yeomen and Volunteers, who will have much to contend with if all I hear about the efficiency of the Imperial Light Horse and other irregular forces be true. Sir Alfred told me of the two main organisations in aid of our wounded and invalided soldiers — the Red Cross and Good Hope Societies — which were acting in harmony now, and doing splendid work. He himself

is taking an active interest in the Refugee Fund; and I learnt that Mr George Peel, so well known to all of us as an organiser in connection with the Khartoum College, had come down from the front, and was in charge of the combined Red Cross and Good Hope Societies. So there is not likely to be overlapping nor any oversight in general management.

I fled from Sir Alfred Milner to Mr Peel, and found him in his office in Parliament House, and at once laid my proposals before him. I pointed out the necessity for the 'Daily Mail' organisation being an individual one, as the money so subscribed was a public trust which could not be spent haphazard by any other society; and I equally endorsed his views that overlapping should be avoided, but that no stone should be left unturned to see the money carefully, yet, when necessity arose, liberally spent. Mr Peel entered heartily into the project, and explained his method of distribution. His two societies were working at the field and base hospitals, and on the transports which were carrying

our wounded home. He agreed to my proposals that I should, on behalf of the Absent-minded Beggar Fund, take over the management of the latter branch by providing luxuries and necessaries for all the wounded men who were placed on board ship, and so we now have each our own branch. I hope Tommy Atkins will have cause to remember his comforts!

I thought it advisable to carry the principal medical officer with me, and I called on Surgeon-General Wilson, who received me most kindly, and entered heartily into the scheme. Then I went to see Major Morgan, who is in charge of the Princess of Wales hospital ship, which sails to-morrow with its cargo of wounded and invalided soldiers. He told me, in answer to my question, that he would be very glad of some fresh fruit, which had not been thought of, and I am off to the market very early to-morrow to buy as many grapes and peaches as he has room for, and which will keep during their long voyage of twenty-eight days.

There were 184 soldiers on board the Princess of Wales, and these were under the care of

three doctors, four sisters, and forty Red Cross orderlies.

Major Morgan afforded me the privilege of looking over the ship, and I must say she has been most beautifully and completely fitted up for the comfort of her inmates. There were only six cot cases, one of them a poor fellow who had lost his leg, but he was quite cheery, and told me how five days after the amputation he had been moved to the base. It is interesting to note that he was one of those wounded by our own shells.

The men all spoke in the highest terms of the treatment they had received from the doctors. I witnessed a pretty little incident, when one fellow who had been shot through the head, and lost the sight of an eye, jumped up as one of the doctors passed and insisted on shaking hands with him, and thanking him for all he had done.

Amongst those on board were thirty-six Guardsmen and a great many of the Highland Light Infantry and Black Watch. Most of them came from the Modder field of battle, but some from Colenso, and among them was a

man who, in trying to save his captain at the big Tugela fight, was crushed by a horse and waggon so badly that he could only speak in a whisper. How dreadfully sad it all is! I saw another unique case, that of a man who had been shot in the shoulder, whence the bullet had passed out through his throat. He was apparently well, but when I put my hand on his neck I felt a vibration like an electric current. The bullet had evidently caused the two veins in the main artery to cross each other, and, strange to say, he only felt the discomfort in the opposite ear.

Although news reaches me as I write that the blankets and rugs sent out as a present from the Princess have not yet come to hand, her Royal Highness must be congratulated on the success of her splendid hospital ship, which would make an ideal invalid transport if only she would go faster.

For the moment I leave the Absent-minded Beggar Fund to tell you I called on Lord Roberts, and was most kindly received. He had his headquarters at 55 Grave Street, where Sir Redvers Buller was before him,

AT THE PORTLAND HOSPITAL.—SISTERS DOSIA AND OLIVE.
Mrs J. Bagot. Lady Henry Bentinck.
Sir John Milbank.

and very comfortable he seemed close to Government House and right opposite the Houses of Parliament. I presented my letters, had a chat with him, and told him my errand, in which he seemed to take the kindliest interest, and he promised to give me a letter to whichever General I wished to see. Truly I am in luck's way, as I had been fighting my fears all the morning, having heard that I should have no chance of a pass.

Triumphantly I returned to the Mount Nelson Hotel, which had found room for me, and I have got with Murray Gourlay a delightful room overlooking the town and Table Bay, which, with the hilly background in the distance, form the most glorious landscape. Here I met Harry Hungerford, Seymour Fortescue (naval A.D.C. to Lord Roberts), Rose Wemyss (of H.M.S. Niobe), and many others, but I shan't stay long now, as the [illegible] is making giant strides towards [illegible]. Meanwhile my companion is [illegible] is turned towards the harbour [illegible] Cape Town chanticleers are [illegible] to the raucous tune of the [illegible].

Jan. 31.—Mr Charles Arnold, who is touring here, with his theatrical company, in "What Happened to Jones," came up to see me at the City Club last night, of which I have been made a temporary member, to tell me how and where to buy my fruit for the invalided troops. You will wonder why *he* came? Well, he has done wonders in this way since he arrived: first he spent his own money, and since then he has received over £70 to support his movement in supplying fresh-cut fruit for our troops at the front—a very laudable act. He came round the market with me very early this morning, and so busy have I been that though it is 2 P.M. I have not yet got a shave. The fact is, all my energies have been directed in seeing to the Princess of Wales hospital ship, and I took the fruit I bought (some 500 lb. of grapes and five large baskets of melons) on board myself, and the 'Daily Mail' Fund has received the warmest thanks from Major Morgan and the purser. Moreover, I have succeeded not only in finding every necessary and luxury for the men on board this ship, but have been able, with the assistance of the

Red Cross, to supply them to 33 others who sailed last night on the Assaye, and am arranging for 150 more who will go on Saturday or early next week.

To Mr George Peel I owe my warmest thanks for his co-operation, and within forty-eight hours of my arrival I find myself, as representing the Absent-minded Beggar Fund, not only in complete unison with all the officials and other societies, but in sole control of a very large and charitable organisation, whereby our soldiers will arrive in old England carefully clothed and fed after a tedious voyage.

I have received the kindliest letter to General Buller from Lord Roberts, with which Murray Gourlay and my servant will be able to get through with me to the Tugela or wherever General Buller has moved. Of course I am in a fever to be off, but have not yet finished my duties here, and may be detained a week. I shall do exactly similar work in Durban, from which port so many wounded are going home on transports which do not call at Cape Town at all.

Feb. 1. — Having called on Sir Forestier

Walker and written my name in his book this morning, I went to report progress to Sir Alfred Milner, as he had asked me to tell him all I was doing for the Absent-minded Beggars. He seemed much pleased at the way things were going, and granted me his patronage for the fund. I shall ask no one else, as I believe in "no committees," and the Queen's representative embraces all the loyal British subjects I might have added to the list of patrons. I dine to-night with Mr J. G. Hamilton, who is treasurer of the Yeomanry Hospital scheme, and who is kindness itself when any information or assistance is required. I hear he has asked Captain Griffin of the Briton, which sails for Durban to-morrow morning, and Algy Lennox. Mr Smart (of the Standard Bank), Murray Gourlay, Mr W. H. Bond, and Harry Hungerford are also of the party.

Feb. 2.—Even in the Cape the torture of being interviewed is in vogue, but I was only too glad this morning to give every possible publicity to the 'Cape Argus' and 'Cape Times' about the work the Absent-minded Beggar Relief Fund has taken up. Then I met

Harry Hungerford, and appointed him my successor in the management. I was glad to do so, as I have known him a great many years, and can trust him to carry out my instructions, and his knowledge of Cape Town and its magnates during the past two years will materially assist the interests and objects of the fund. I next caught the train to Rondebosch, near which station (about six miles from Cape Town) the Portland Hospital is situated, determined to ascertain how it was getting on under the management of its two chief nurses, Lady Henry Bentinck and Mrs Bagot. A drive of about a mile through shady pine groves in a country interspersed with smiling villas gave me my introduction to some of nature's finest scenery. Everywhere happiness seemed to reign, despite the war which was raging at no great distance; on all sides the birds were singing, the turtle-doves cooing, and the bright plumbago and bougainvillea twining their network of antennæ in a natural growth. And then, forced upon my view, came the hospital camp of white tents, and the orderlies and nurses hurrying hither and thither in their

business-like way, extending all the comforts a great and civilised nation can afford for the welfare of the men who are wounded in her cause. I sent my card in, and was at once ushered into the mess-tent where Lady Henry and Mrs Bagot were sitting, and soon I was deep in conversation with the former while Mrs Bagot "went the rounds." Imagine a dream of beauty in brown holland dress, a soft white fichu round her neck, a pretty straw hat with pale blue ribbon to match a belt of the same colour, and, over the whole, a dainty workman-like pinafore and Red Cross armlet, and you will picture one of the angels of mercy who has given up the comfort of her home to take her share of the work (as Mrs Harter puts it) that "none else can accomplish but they." When I saw Mrs Bagot visiting the tents with a basket-load of cigarettes and other luxuries, I understood why the soldiers looked so contented and happy, and I almost hoped that if I was wounded I might occupy a cot in the Portland Hospital! Major Kilkelly, who is the surgeon-in-charge, kindly showed me over the whole camp, and very perfect it seemed, with

its Rontgen-ray apparatus and little electric engine and dynamo, and every other medical necessary that money can provide for a perfect equipment. The hospital occupied about three acres of ground, and had about twelve tents with an average of eight beds to each (I believe the hospital can accommodate 104 patients): and in some I saw men reading, in others they were smoking, and in another one I was initiated into a game of "brag" which was being played by four almost convalescent "Tommies." The two "heads" of the hospital are called "sister" by all the men, and Mrs Harter well expresses it when she says,—

> "In the stress of their need, they are sisters indeed
> In the hearts of the nation to-day."

I had a cup of tea and a long talk with Lady Henry about starting a convalescent home out here. It is sadly needed, for whatever the medical authorities may say, there are cases of consumption and other diseases which will probably kill the patients if they return home during the cold season. There was a consumptive case in the Portland hos-

pital, and I am doing all I can to get the man, who is to return by the Kildonan Castle on Monday, to remain here if a home and money can be found. Mr J. D. Logan, one of the members of Parliament, has offered cottages, &c., at Matjesfontein, and I am making inquiries about this, and hope to meet and have a chat with the man who has made this generous and hitherto unaccepted offer. You who are at home must dispel from your mind any idea that the amateurs in the Portland Hospital *are* amateurs. They are doing a power of good work which is much appreciated by the poor sufferers.

Feb. 4, 10 P.M.—I am in the train between Cape Town and Matjesfontein. You will realise the difficulty of keeping pace with the enormous amount of work I have had to cram into a very short space of time; and even now as I write in a shaky sleeping compartment I feel as if there will be no night for me, so much have I to tell you. To continue on a subject I had wound up with last time I wrote, I am in the train on my way to see Mr

Logan at Matjesfontein, a place nearly 3000 feet above sea-level, in a beautifully healthy if sterile region, and about 100 miles from Cape Town. No sooner had I been infected with the idea that a home for convalescents would prove a godsend, and hardly had I learnt of the refusal by the military authorities of Mr Logan's generous offer to place houses at the disposal of the Government, than I made up my mind, after consulting one or two people "in the know," and to whom the word red-tape could not be attached, to see if Mr Logan would renew his offer to the 'Daily Mail' for their Absent-minded Beggars. A telegram was soon replied to, and I am off to see what can be done in this direction. I return to-morrow night, and will then tell you the result. Meanwhile I must hark back to my doings during the past two days. I ran out to Rondebosch for the second time with Sir John Milbank, who is making a good recovery from his serious wound, to pay another visit to the Portland Hospital, where he had been so well nursed. The idea of the convalescent home

has much impressed those in authority there, —in fact, I am not at all sure that, if I got to the bottom of it, I should not find the scheme originated from the brains of one of the "fair sisters" there; and I was glad to hear the case of consumption is not to be so peremptorily dealt with, as the departure to-morrow of the Kildonan Castle had led me to fear. Lord Henry Bentinck and Captain Bagot were both on the spot, representing the work and money of this snug little hospital. The "sisters" did not at all approve of a photograph I wanted to take, as a south-easter had had (so they imagined without the aid of a looking-glass) a detrimental effect on their coiffure; so I was bidden to return another day for this purpose, and we returned to Cape Town about 6 P.M. There I learnt how exceedingly onerous the duties of a press censor are! I will quote you an extraordinary case. The manager of the 'Daily Mail' at Cape Town had sent a telegram on my behalf, which ran as follows: "Sir Alfred Milner granted patronage. Red Cross Society takes charge of hospitals at the front. Good Hope Society works

at the base. Absent-minded Beggar Relief Fund has sole charge of wounded going home on ships."

The telegram was delayed for forty-eight hours before we were informed that it could not be sent. Note that it had nothing to do with the war. On inquiry, we were informed by Lord Stanley that he could not sanction a message about the Red Cross Society without being satisfied as to its truth. We asked him why he had passed the first sentence, and he said that he had sent up to Government House to inquire if it were true! I had to produce a letter from the Hon. George Peel, who was then manager of the Red Cross Society, to satisfy him that I was not a liar. Imagine the following instance: A man telegraphs to a friend, "I am engaged to marry Miss So-and-so," and the censor cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement without seeing Miss So-and-so to get her confirmation, and you have the facts in a nutshell. I think you will also see the ridiculous side of what was, to say the least of it, a most annoying and unnecessary instance of red-tape, stupidity, or gross

interference. I dined with Abe Bailey, Milbank, and Algy Lennox. The first has done a great deal of hard and good work in procuring horses and giving the Government information and advice which his knowledge of the country for so many years past was able to afford. The previous night I had dined at Government House, and had a long talk with Mrs Hanbury Williams, who has been the leader of so many charitable organisations since the war broke out. It is an interesting fact that we know nothing in Cape Town till long after you do in London, and only to-night (Sunday, February 4) have we learnt of the great loss we have sustained at Spion Kop. I am not going to deal with matters of controversy just now, but I am much mistaken if Sir Alfred Milner knows half of what is going on, or if he gets his information till long after others know it. This mysterious silence is being carried too far, and gives one the impression that the military authorities are afraid to own their losses or their mistakes till something turns up to cause the general public to forget them. This *en passant*. Govern-

THE PORTLAND HOSPITAL AT RONDEBOSCH.

THE BOER PRISONERS OF WAR AT SIMONSTOWN.

ment House is a quaint comfortable building, just above the Houses of Parliament, and it would be difficult to find a kinder or better host than the present governor, who is going through a very trying period of difficulty and unrest (I should perhaps use the word treason) with a *sang-froid* and calm firmness which reflect credit not only on his appointment but on the qualities of character so necessary to define a great *dictator populorum*. To-day I have been to Simon's Town to pay a visit to the Niobe, of which my cousin, Rosie Wemyss, is commander, and also to see the Boer prisoners who were landed from the transport Catalonia yesterday. I received a special [illegible] overnight from the staff officer in command of her Majesty's prisoners of war at [illegible] Simon's Town and on board the Niobe [illegible] to hear the commander give the following quaint order: "Unrig church [illegible] ing." "Unrigging" church appeared [illegible] sisted in lowering a flag which was [illegible] indicate that service was in progress and [illegible] carrying away at its termination of [illegible] benches; and the latter part of the [illegible]

meant that during service no man on deck was allowed to smoke.

Feb. 5.—I was unable to continue my letter last night, owing to the shakiness of the train, but here goes! I had a good look over the Niobe before lunch, and what a beautiful ship she is. Even the Powerful, which was lying alongside of her, is not so perfect; but I was sorry not to see Hedworth Lambton, who is locked up in Ladysmith with the Naval Brigade. The crew of the Niobe are fretting dreadfully at their enforced detention in Simon's Bay, when, as one of them put it, "If they want to put an end to the war why don't they send for our guns?" a truism that requires no comment. But I am inclined to think that the little incident at Suda was the reason the Admiralty kept their fleet as intact as possible, in case of emergencies on the other side of the Straits of Gibraltar. They seemed a very cheery lot in the ward-room mess at luncheon, and spent a good deal of time in fishing—and what fishing it must be! Only two days ago one of the middies caught a

Cape salmon weighing 112 lb., and his own weight was only 120 lb., but I believe it required the assistance of four brother officers to land the monster, which stood 5 ft. 8 in. After lunch we went on shore, and I paid Mrs O'Brien (Mr Harmsworth's sister-in-law) a visit at the British Hotel. Her husband is besieged in Kimberley, and they were only married a few days before this occurred. She is very interested in our poor Absent-minded Beggars, and assists at concerts and other amusements for the patients in the hospitals. We then went on to the naval cricket-ground close to the fort, where the Boer prisoners are encamped, over which a guard of the Warwickshire Militia, under Captain Beattie, was stationed to look after them. They were a curious sight, men with beards and without them, and some with only part of one, in red flannel shirts and dirty white ones, in slouch hats or caps, some in khaki trousers, others of different patterns, and one and all shouting and laughing as they indulged in a cricket match with a mallet and a rope ball! Every now

and again there would be a rush to the canteen, and then the game would be resumed. They were surrounded like wild animals by a 12-foot barbed-wire fence, with sentries all round them, and really it was necessary, as while on board the Catalonia three did try to escape. But isn't it ridiculous that in harbour every temptation to do so should have been afforded them by the supplying of life-belts to each cabin? One of the three men was picked up twenty-four hours later on shore, another was caught by the patrol-boat hanging on to a buoy, and the third is believed to have fallen a victim to sharks, which abound in these waters. Mr Julius Jeppy and Mr Rüssik were friends of ours, and we got permission to see them, and a very pleasant half hour we had *outside* their prison. I say *outside*, because I am not sure if it would have been diplomatic to go in; and as I hear already of insults to the Warwickshire men who have to act as scavengers *inside* the Boer encampment, I hope the authorities will see to this, and deal peremptorily with any such case, as

it is a disgrace to allow our men to do the prisoners' duty under insult without making the latter pay dearly for their conduct. The prisoners were for the most part Transvaalers. Some were taken at Elandslaagte, and these consisted chiefly of Free Staters, but there were a number of Germans (among them Colonel Schiel), and those who might be called good fellows were much mixed up with the most awful riff-raff imaginable. It is amusing to note that there was only one officer amongst them when taken (Colonel Schiel), but since their capture a great many had received their commissions! Julius Jeppy is a man of some personality, and he was offered his parole, but declined it unless his friend Rüssik got it as well. I hope the military authorities granted them both a "free pass," as neither wished to fight, but they were commandeered. They told us they were very kindly cared for, and I gathered that the war might be over in six months if it was concluded before we reached Pretoria. If, however, we had to reduce Pretoria, they believed the siege of that town, which was magnificently

fortified, would occupy in itself six months. There were 1500 Germans fighting for the Boers.

The last time I met Rüssik was at Monte Carlo in 1896, in the Casino. Talking of coincidences reminds me of my meeting an old Scotchman in the train the other day on my way to Rondebosch. He saw my kodak, and asked me if I had been taking some snapshots. I told him the kodak had found plenty of employment since I landed from the Briton, to which he asked, "And was the Earl of Rosslyn on board?" "Yes," I said, "he is opposite to you now," and the old fellow was delighted. It turned out that he was an old Fife Freemason from Kirkcaldy, who had been present when I laid the foundation-stone of the Fever Hospital there on the Queen's Jubilee Day in 1897. He was anxious to see me, and we shook hands heartily while he told me he was then a town councillor, but that the coal strike had ruined him, as it did many others, and he had migrated here,—with poor results, I regret to say, owing to the war. His name was Skinner. I hope this anecdote

will reach the ears of his many friends in Fife. I am trying to find him employment on the Absent-minded Beggar Relief Fund.

It was a fearfully hot day, and we returned in a crowded train in time to dine, and then I started off for Matjesfontein to see Mr Logan about the convalescent home.

Feb. 7. — I got back yesterday morning, after two nights in the train, delighted with my visit to Matjesfontein. The village itself consists of one row of neatly built houses of all sizes and shapes. A big open square separates them from the railway station, which at one time was a terminus on the western branch. There I met my host, Mr Logan, who provided me with a delicious bath and excellent breakfast. He may well be proud of the smartness and growth of this snug and healthy little place. It will interest you to know that the member for Worcester (South Africa) began life as a railway porter some forty years ago, and soon found himself stationmaster of Matjesfontein. With the keen foresight of a Scotsman (Mr Logan comes from Berwickshire), and blessed not

only by a good education but with the well-known business bump, he foresaw the growth that was to take place in South Africa under the dictatorship of Mr Rhodes. And now we find him, if not a millionaire, at least a very rich man, known and respected by everybody, and member of Parliament for a constituency which probably contains as many acres as the whole of Scotland put together. Married to a charming Dutch lady, he has two children, a boy and girl: the former has been educated at Blair Lodge, and is an exceptionally good cricketer. This is not surprising, as Mr Logan has himself always captained and managed the South African teams which only a year or two ago were opposed by Lord Hawke's England Eleven. There is a capital cricket-ground at Matjesfontein, a bank, a large flour-mill, a resident doctor (also from Berwickshire), and a hotel, which, having outgrown its demand, has been succeeded by a new and magnificent house, and carries for its sign the High Commissioner's name of Milner. During the war there has been no one more generous than Mr Logan, no one who has

worked harder and been more successful in procuring comforts for our troops as they passed through Matjesfontein on their way to the front. On Monday when I was there the ringing cheers of the North Staffords and South Wales Borderers testified that the inner man had been well catered for during their half-hour's stay, and I doubt if there are any officers, from Lord Roberts to the last joined subaltern in Kitchener's Horse, who have not felt the grip of Mr Logan's hand or partaken of his hospitality. Only last November Mr Logan offered the military authorities the old hotel, the new one he has just finished, and three other annexes, as a hospital; and he also offered £200 a-month for six months to assist in its maintenance. General Buller, to whom the offer was made, referred the matter to the medical authorities, while thanking Mr Logan for his generosity. Since then (Nov. 19) Mr Logan has never heard a word from the authorities. It is passing strange that a place such as Matjesfontein, noted throughout Cape Colony as a health resort, situated 3000 feet above the sea-level,

with an excellent water-supply and the best of sanitary arrangements, should have been passed over, and the kind offer neglected by the powers that be, over whom the Principal Medical Officer presides. Surgeon-General Wilson told me the reason of its non-acceptance was that it was too far from the seat of operations, and too near the base! I have now told you my reasons for trying to step in where others feared to tread. Mr Logan has renewed his offer to me, or any part of it, to assist me with my scheme for a convalescent home for our wounded soldiers. I have therefore cabled to London to the fund I represent, asking if they will assist me, and I anxiously await their reply, as on it depends whether I leave for Durban on the 10th or stay to set in motion this new scheme. If I am allowed, I shall begin operations on a small scale, and see how it grows, as my one fear is that Tommy Atkins will prefer to go home and die rather than stay here and live. The best advertisement of the health-giving qualities of Matjesfontein is George Lohmann, the well-known Surrey cricketer,

whom I saw on Monday, and who swears by it.

To turn to other subjects. After breakfast I met another Scotchman, Mr Robert Brown, the chief engineer of the Cape Railways, who was returning from his tour of inspection. He and Mr Logan had seen the battle of the Modder river, and had gone over the Boer trenches after their evacuation. He showed me many curiosities he had picked up, among them a piece of a Vickers-Maxim shield, broken sharp off by a shrapnel shell, some Mauser and Martini cases, while from our field of operations he gathered a 4·7-inch cartridge-case. Mr Logan showed me poor General Wauchope's sword. It was in his house, and he was waiting instructions what to do with it, but I suggested that it should be sent home. The marks of his life's blood were plainly visible on the hilt. He knew Mr Logan well, and the latter had his remains conveyed (not from the battlefield, for they were not buried there) to Matjesfontein, and thence they were solemnly and reverently interred at Pieter Meintjes, about six m

down the railway, on Mr Logan's property. About 200 military attended the obsequies, and his charger was also brought down. He lies in a beautiful spot, and I went off to see his grave, which still carried the tokens of esteem and love in which he was held, and which were deposited on the day he was buried in December. Close by him is the grave of Mr Maitland Grant and his three children (the former killed in a railway accident six years ago at Trows river), and to whose memory a marble obelisk is plainly visible from the railway. General Wauchope lies in a plot of ground surrounded by a neat white fence. On one side his grave is shielded from the north-east winds by a rugged kopje, while a dozen beautiful cypress trees extend their evergreen branches to shelter gratefully from the rays of Afric's noonday sun the mortal remains of one of Scotland's greatest heroes. *Requiescat in pace!*

Mr Logan thought an afternoon's shooting would amuse me, so he brought guns, and for three hours we tramped over the veldt. Everywhere the Namaqua dove was flitting

gracefully; anon a lizard stopped to raise its head in remonstrance at my intrusion, and mice with big white eyes dodged from hole to hole. From a thick high patch a rustling noise was heard, but long before I could get a shot the springbok was 200 yards away in mad flight; and then crouching under the soaring "lammerfunger" (a huge species of eagle), a covey of whistling partridges rose. One fell, and we pursued the rest, and bagged another brace. A lanky hare sat up in its form to look first at its disturbers, and then it too fell a victim. "Ool! ool!" was shouted by the Kaffir boys as an old barndoor owl flapped lazily away, much to the disgust of the beaters. A wild cat we missed, and a troop of baboons went chattering over a kopje. Then we got on to a railway trolley, and, aided by a downward grade, soon reached Matjesfontein, in time for a late lunch. The sun was setting when we dined; and at eight o'clock I was in the train, after one of the most delightful days.

I found the mail had arrived from England on my return to Cape Town, that the Kildonan

Castle's invalided soldiers had been well cared for by Harry Hungerford during my absence, and then I turned for the Mount Nelson Hotel, where Mrs O'Brien had come to lunch with me from Simon's Town. Mrs Solomon, wife of the Attorney-General, was also there, full of all that was being done in charity's name, and I have been asked to recite the "Absent-minded Beggar" in the theatre on Friday and pass the hat round. I shall do this if I have not gone to Durban. Sir Alfred Milner has given his patronage, but will not be present. I think he does not wish to give his loyal supporters the opportunity they are dying for of causing a popular demonstration just when the Bond is making these villainous and infamous attacks upon him. In my next chapter I will tell you more of the manners and customs of Cape Town than of myself.

VIEW OF THE PARK AT GROOT SCHUUR.
Table Mountain in background

THE C.I.V.M.I. LEAVING CAPETOWN FOR THE FRONT.

CHAPTER IV.

I LEAVE CAPE TOWN.

GROOT SCHUUR—BILLY LAMBTON—"WOMEN OF BRITAIN"—DEPARTURE FOR THE FRONT OF C.I.V.—I RECITE KIPLING'S POEM IN THE THEATRE—MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND PEOPLE OF CAPE TOWN—WYNBERG AND ITS HOSPITALS.

Feb. 10.—My convalescent home scheme is at an end. It was too big an undertaking for the 'Daily Mail.' I am disappointed. Perhaps it is as well it is so, as it gives me time to think of some new venture, build some fresh castle in the air, and, more than that, it takes me from Cape Town, where the organisation for the Absent-minded Beggar Fund is at length complete, and leaves me free to go my way to do similar work at Durban, and then start at once for Sir Redvers Buller's camp, where I shall present my letter

from Lord Roberts. This will probably be on the 19th, as Murray Gourlay has arrived at Durban, and is paving the way for me, and the manager I have appointed for Durban, Mr C. E. Gillet, is on board this ship with me as I write: Before leaving the Cape I went over to Groot Schuur, Cecil Rhodes' place at Rondebosch, where Lady Edward Cecil and Lady Charles Bentinck sat lonely "in their castled hall," waiting the relief and return of their two besieged lords, who were in Mafeking, and keeping the house in order till Kimberley and Cecil Rhodes were once more safe. It is a dream of a place, in a neighbourhood which I have already described as one of nature's most beautiful pictures. The blue hydrangeas were nearly over, but the banks of other brilliant flowers at the back of the house, and the magnificent specimens of palms, pines, and oaks, bore testimony to the fertility of the South African soil; while towering behind the Zoological Gardens was the natural background of that grand mountain range of which "the Table" forms the centre. Progressive Mr Rhodes undoubtedly is, and he does not shun the prying

and inquisitive sightseer, but gives every one free access to this lovely place. I have rarely seen a house built in better taste, and the interior is a model of comfort, elegance, and modesty. I had a chance after lunch of seeing the famous lioness he sent to Kruger for the Pretoria Zoo. She is so tame as to allow any one to pat her, but I think it is as well she is chained up.

By the way, Admiral Maxse, who has since died, was living close by his daughter at Rondebosch, and Mrs Ivor Maxse (who was a Leconfield) was with him. They were both at lunch at Groot Schuur, as were Lord and Lady Henry Bentinck, Algy Lennox, Jack Milbank, and Billy Lambton, who was just out of hospital, and on crutches. He was wounded seven days after his arrival (Nov. 23rd I think it was) by a piece of shell, which has to be cut out just below the knee. He talks quite cheerfully of going to the front in two weeks, but I am afraid it will be two months at any rate. The Medical Board, by the bye, have spun John Milbank, and he has been ordered home by the next ship. Poor chap!

he is very disappointed, but he had had his chance before he got his wound, and has done very well.

The Avoca called at Cape Town on Thursday on her way home from Durban with 347 wounded, and we did all we could to make them comfortable during the journey, and to-day, I think, the Britannic takes a few more from the Wynberg hospitals. I went over to Wynberg and recited the "Women of Britain" to the poor fellows there. It is a great treat for them to have a little concert every week, and Mrs Fraser was managing one for them last Wednesday when I was there. Her husband, like Mrs O'Brien's, was shut up in Kimberley, and Mrs Murray, whose husband was also at Kimberley, was living in that neighbourhood too, so that they see much of each other, and can

> "Take each her share of the sorrows they bear,
> And lighten the grief of the whole."

I was very sorry to hear of Mrs O'Brien's father's death. He must have died the day

ADDERLEY STREET.

THE AVENUE OF OAKS AT CAPETOWN.

she was lunching with me, and of course the concert was robbed of her valuable assistance, as she is a brilliant violinist.

The news that the C.I.V.M.I. (the detachment which came out with us on the Briton) were to start for the front on Friday flashed like wildfire throughout Cape Town, and I was fully prepared for a hearty send-off to London's first supplement, but astonished at the extraordinary demonstration of enthusiasm accorded them yesterday afternoon. They left their camp at 1.30 P.M., and were timed to pass down Adderley Street at 2 P.M., and shortly after that hour, preceded by a band, amid the ringing cheers of a genuinely excited crowd, with their colonel at their head, the regiment, in column of fours, appeared. You may talk of a London crush, because its population so exceeds the standing-room a street can give them; but Cape Town turned out man, woman, and child—a hot, panting, seething mass—each struggling with a hat or handkerchief to be foremost and heartiest in the welcome. It did one's heart good to see this outburst of devotion, to hear this expression of loyalty, and to listen to the ring-

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ing cheers. I gripped as many of the officers' hands as I could, God bless them! and with the men, with whom I had made such good friends, I got in a cheery "good-bye" and "good luck," and then they disappeared to receive the mayor's godspeed and to entrain for no-one-knows-where. They looked well and fit, and the only thing I noticed was that their horses (I should rather call them ponies) seemed hidden under the panoply of kit which hung on all sides of them! I can tell you this, that the men looked as fine as—and I would like to say finer than—any body of irregular horse I have seen leave Cape Town since my arrival. They are sure to do well, but it is bad luck that just before they started there were several cases of scarlet fever and mumps among them at Green Point camp, and no fewer than fifty of their horses had to be left behind with pink-eye, influenza, &c. I turned away to say good-bye to his Excellency, and the last thing I saw was a tall C.I.V. (one of the latest arrivals) acting sentry at his gate!

Last night before I came on board I recited the "Absent-minded Beggar" in the Opera

House, after the second act of the piece which Mr Charles Arnold and his company have been playing. It was rather a trying ordeal, as it was only arranged forty-eight hours beforehand, and one cannot possibly do justice to a poem full of such vague though dashing language. It would have gone splendidly but for a momentary breakdown in the last verse, and thereanent I have a little tale against myself. I had got to the line,—

"And they'll put their sticks and bedding up the spout,"

when a coin hit me on the head. I couldn't remember how the line began, when I heard a voice behind me from the chorus which said "Sticks." I very nearly resented the interruption till I realised the humour of the situation, and remembered the line. I was "sticking" indeed!

Rudyard Kipling, by the way, arrived from England last week, and was staying at the Mount Nelson Hotel. I tried to persuade him to come, and told him of my nervousness, but he cheered me by this delightful remark, "Oh, you can't hurt the piece—it's too bad already!"

And yet, written at a stirring moment, it has been the means of raising over £100,000 for the benefit of the soldiers and their families! The Opera House has never before been so crowded, and money was showered on the stage. Two of the company who were singing in the chorus had their eye and chin cut, and I got four coins on my head, so no wonder my memory failed me! We got over £100—a truly magnificent sum, and I am glad to have done something for the fund. By the way, it had never been done before in the way we did it. After each verse that I recited the company joined in and sang the chorus, giving the performance a great go and dash which was most popular.

I have told you all I have done in eleven days, so I'll try, now I am on board ship again, to give you a little idea of what I think of Cape Town, its manners, customs, and people, —though an eleven days' insight is hardly long enough to make it more than a mere sketch,— before I conclude the second stage of my journey to the front. To begin with, its natural surroundings have made an ideal site for a busy seaport town, and the convicts' good work in

making the breakwater and harbour quays is at once apparent. The difficulties of berthing the hundreds of transports, so that they could discharge their warlike cargoes, have been immense, and Cape Town and its authorities can certainly place a feather in their caps for the extraordinary way they have coped with what might at first have appeared an impossible task. I should have liked you to see the bay and the docks crammed with shipping; the quays loaded with stores and munitions of war; the transports and great liners unshipping their human freights, and reshipping from the ambulance trains the wounded soldiers. I should have liked you to stand for one hour and watched you try to count the thousands of trollies and cabs passing and repassing, and the innumerable horses landed from Britain, America, and India, for you to thoroughly realise the enormous activity of this little town. You would have been amused at the varied types represented by the Kaffir and Malay, the English and the Dutch, the Indian and the half-caste, the soldier and the civilian, each vieing with the

other to carry out his particular object, and withal the most delightful contentment, determination, and good-humour on each face. To Sir Edward Chichester, the naval officer at the Clock Tower, who is in charge of the transports, a large meed of praise is due for his indefatigable energy and his extraordinary organisation; and the customs authorities, too, are doing their work quickly and good-naturedly under the management of Captain Borcherd, the surveyor. If you pass the customs gate you make some allowance for the shocking state of the dock road, in consideration of its share in the transference of humanity and military equipment from the docks to the station; and then you find yourself in a busy little side street, parallel to which runs Adderley Street, the main thoroughfare of Cape Town. Civilisation—very modern civilisation, with its electric light, electric trams, and telephone—stares you in the face. There is little if anything that you cannot be supplied with. The buildings are admirable instances of improved architecture and design. The Post Office towers over everything else, the Stan-

dard Bank of South Africa is prominent, the Railway Station is spacious and provides all natural requirements, while the Fruit Market in Sir Lowry Road and the new Fish Market in Dock Road are well suited for their requirements; and moving farther up, you find the Civil Service and City Clubs as comfortable as any Turf or White's. There is a fine cathedral, of course quite modern, with no pretensions to Gothic work, and a grand public library; and then you find yourself opposite to what must be the Houses of Parliament, an imposing edifice of white stone and red bricks, where the struggles 'twixt Imperialism and Dutch Independence form so important a feature just now in South African politics. Still farther up you come to the good old-fashioned type of Government House, looking on to the avenue of oaks which leads up to the Mount Nelson Hotel, where I have been staying. I didn't quite expect to be fed on biltong when I arrived, but I certainly did not expect to find a modern up-to-date hotel every bit as good (if I except the cuisine) as the Hôtel de Paris at Monte Carlo! It is under

the management of the Castle Steamship Co.,
and stands beautifully at the foot of Table
Mountain, looking down over the town and
bay. Having reached the hotel, I naturally
stop for a moment to contemplate and digest
its inmates. They were a very interesting
houseful, but I was most struck by the extra-
ordinary number of English people, and could
almost have believed myself at Hurlingham or
Ranelagh on a warm summer evening. Of
course the men were nearly all soldiers, some re-
covering from their wounds, others just arriving
from England to make preparations for the land-
ing of the Yeomanry. Here you met a militia-
man, there an ambitious volunteer for any irreg
ular horse. There were officers on leave fr
the front, and officers growling at being kep
the base, officers who couldn't get employ
and officers who wanted more. And am
this crowd of Britain's sons, the coloni
was to be found, a true type of sold
to fight for Canada or Australia, a
win or die under the flag of his be
Oh! these are heart-stirring
imagine them dimly in old E

realise them thoroughly out here on the spot, and I am almost ashamed to wield an ill-appointed pen instead of a well-ground sword. I wish I could do both. Perhaps I shall in the near future, as I hear Winston Churchill is doing so. Then, too, among the hotel people you saw the rich Johannesburg speculator, who has fled from his place of business to live a life of luxury while England puts matters straight for him. I do not blame him for his idle life, as probably he could not fight if he wanted to, and certainly he does what he ought to do, and offers hospitality to every new arrival. Ladies of all kinds you meet, from the attorney-general's wife to the woman who waits anxiously for her husband's return, ever ready to be near his bedside when wounded, and meanwhile ministering as far as she can to the wants of the hospital patients. At a centre table you see, punctual at their meals, a group of foreign military attachés fresh from the scene of Buller's defeat, and sent back by him in order that Lord Roberts may have the pleasure of their society. But Lord Roberts is not over keen for their company, and has left them

behind for a few days in charge of Lord Downe, and they are fuming at not being allowed to start for the front, while one threatens to make representations to his Government if he does not see more of the fighting than he has done. In fact, the position of bear-leader to these international representatives is no sinecure!

What impression does this *tout ensemble* at the hotel give me? It gives me the impression of a well-managed house of correction, full of inmates who would rather be elsewhere, but who, compelled to remain, make the best of their time eating, drinking, sleeping, and gossiping, and waiting quite confidently for the ultimate victory of the British arms. In the town itself the luncheon hour finds all the busy people in the club. There you see Hoffmeyer and his partisans—a look of anxiety on their faces which is not relieved by the knowledge that they are eyed with suspicion, mistrust, and even dislike, and assuredly their day of reckoning is at hand. Close by, Julius Weil, the largest owner of oxen and waggons in South Africa, sits counting the fortune he is making out of this war; while the well-to-do business

men, loyalists all [illegible] to their work again [illegible] victim to the [illegible] Milner [illegible] ing firmly and [illegible] the [illegible] political [illegible] which [illegible] whole of [illegible] revolution. What [illegible] the general tone of political feeling [illegible] in the neighbourhood of [illegible] war [illegible] the great [illegible] ing [illegible] and then them against the [illegible] piece [illegible]

[illegible]

for rivalry — and by rivalry I mean petty jealousies—I should say the work in each is admirably done. At first they were undoubtedly under-nursed, and even now the "sisters" would, I am sure, be glad of a little more recreation; but that scourge red-tape, though still applicable, can scarcely be called prevalent. The Red Cross and Good Hope Societies were doing well, but I do not hesitate to say that the advent of the 'Daily Mail' fund of relief has given them both a fillip which will prove of the greatest importance in keeping each section up to the mark, so that neither will be able to claim better work than the other. The less we stick to laid-down rules, and the more we show our independence in the public cause, the sooner will red-tape become extinct. I leave Cape Town, grateful to many for their assistance and kindness, and confident not only in its loyalty but in its future development as the head of one of our greatest and most important possessions.

CHAPTER V.

CAPE TOWN TO DURBAN.

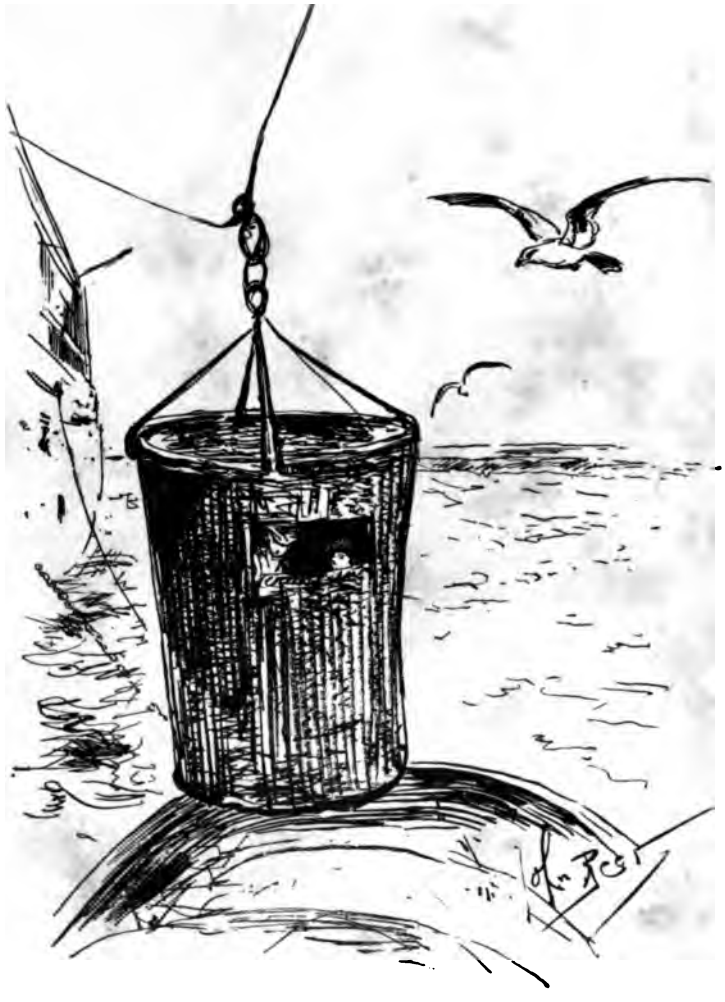
PATRIOTIC DESERTERS—PORT ELIZABETH—DISAPPOINTMENT—EAST LONDON—AT DURBAN—MAJOR MACORMAC—RED-TAPE IN THE R.A.M.C.—JINRICKSHA-MEN—REFUGEES AND RELIEF—THE GRAND SEIGNEURS OF DURBAN—DAVID HUNTER—THE MAINE HOSPITAL-SHIP—THE NUBIA.

Feb. 12.—We dropped anchor at Port Elizabeth yesterday afternoon, and to our regret were informed that we must stay till the next evening, as we had a great deal of cargo to take on board for East London. It was 8 A.M. on Saturday morning when the Kinfauns Castle left Cape Town, her departure being delayed by the desertion of two firemen who showed a desire to enlist in some irregular force and in a very irregular manner! They were promptly handed over by the authorities,

and though yesterday both were on board, one has since succeeded in making his escape! We were not many passengers when we left, and no one of great interest, if I exclude Mr Lewis, who is one of Mr Rhodes's political agents in Cape Colony, and two young Meyricks (brothers of the one in the Gordons), and a Mr Walker (from Yorkshire), who were on their way to try and find employment with Thorneycroft's Horse.

I spoke elsewhere of the ridiculous and unfair system of raising money for sports and then spending two-thirds of it on the ship's band and other servants of the Company. It appears that this ship brought out the managing director of the Castle Steam Packet Company, Mr Mirrielees, that he was elected chairman of the Sports Committee, and that he allowed the same system to be carried out, whereby a very large proportion of the £100 collected went for the purpose I am so strongly opposed to. Really it is a disgrace, and now that this Castle-Union amalgamation has been effected, it is high time some notice were taken of this iniquitous practice.

THE HOTEL MILNER, MATJESFONTEIN.
Offered as a Convalescent Home by Hon. J. D. Logan, M.L.A.



THE WAY WE WERE LANDED AT DURBAN!

Port Elizabeth did not seem a very imposing place, but the bay was full of shipping and activity, and no doubt it is a thriving town. It is forty-eight hours by rail to Cape Town, and barely thirty by sea. While in harbour my chief amusement was in watching the Kaffir passengers, of whom we had a good number. They were too funny to watch, and seemed a cheery lot of fellows, while their dress, to say the least of it, was eccentric. One man was very jealous because I wanted to take a snapshot of his wife! but they appeared very fond of a cigarette.

It was here we got the news of Buller having again been compelled to relinquish the positions he had occupied, and it seemed a hopeless task for him to try and get through to Ladysmith unless a very strong move on Bloemfontein relieved him of some of his opposing forces. Colonel Colville of the Rifle Brigade, who has been commandant at Naauwpoort, came on board on his way to join his regiment, which has lost a good many officers and men in the last fight.

I went on shore in a tug, and it wasn't the

pleasantest of experiences, as a south-west gale made a mackintosh rather more than a necessity. I wanted to cable a birthday message home, but had to take it first to the military authorities to get it viséd! I found Port Elizabeth a clean and bright little place, with large broad streets and squares, and full of fine buildings. It stands on the slope of a hill, with its back to the south, from which quarter most of their bad weather comes, and high up is what is called the "residential" part of the town. Everywhere prosperity is written, but in a chat I had with the manager of the Bank of Africa he told me that the ordinary business was absolutely at a standstill, and that what I saw was entirely a new kind of trade, and due solely to the war. It was the most British town of the two I had seen. At the Cape black men and Dutch names abounded, but in Port Elizabeth one could hardly find any name or sign on shop or tavern which was not English, or prefixed by the word "Mac." The electric tram ran everywhere; and they had, as at Cape Town, an excellent method of watering their streets (so necessary in this dusty country) by means of a

huge water-tank, which ran by electricity up and down the tram lines. The Wilts, Derbys, and Welsh regiments formed the military depot, but I had no time to visit the base hospital, which accommodated 100 patients, and was then full of men who had been incapacitated by enteric fever. Port Elizabeth forms a point in the base of a triangle of which Cape Town is the corresponding point and De Aar the apex, but it seems incongruous that the railway system should necessitate journeying *vid* the apex in order to reach either of the corners of the base. Time will probably remedy this defect.

I called on behalf of the 'Daily Mail' to thank Mr Raper for the excellent result of a recitation of the Kipling poem which was given last week, whereby £36, 5s. was sent to the Absent-minded Beggar Fund. Then I got back to the ship, and we sailed for East London about 7 P.M. It was quite an exciting stay of forty-eight hours, as we succeeded in rescuing in the nick of time a half-swamped sailing-boat and her crew, who, caught in the gale, could not make the harbour; and we also captured a

30-lb. Cape salmon from the side of the ship. I heard here of poor Freddy Tait's death. He had already been slightly wounded, but went back to his work nearly two months ago, only to meet a soldier's death. I could realise the sorrow of his many friends in old Scotland, who lose not only a popular soldier but their champion amateur golfer.

Feb. 14.—To-day is St Valentine's Day, but the only communications I have received here at East London are two telegrams—one from Murray Gourlay at Durban, telling me the Absent-minded Beggar organisation was practically complete, and only awaited my approval; the second from Cape Town, saying a cable had been received from London cancelling the authority to form a branch at Durban! Truly a pretty state of affairs! I am by no means in the best of moods, as I came out to go to the front, but gave up so much time to this Relief Fund, in order to see it started in all perfection, that I asked Lord Roberts for a letter to Sir Redvers Buller, that I might be close at hand when the rest of my work at Durban was complete.

I wanted, of course, to go up to Modder or Orange river. However, I have to make the best of a bad job, which is still more complicated by the arrival of Richard Harding Davis at Cape Town, who, I am told, is coming up to Buller as 'Daily Mail' representative.

It is a chilly kind of day, with a drizzling rain and mist, almost obscuring East London from the ship's view. There is a nasty "bar" to get across, but once over, a trip up the Buffalo river is said to be well worth doing. All I could dimly see through the mist was a large camp of refugees living on the bounty of this country and the charity of the Lord Mayor's Fund.

Feb. 11.—We are just coming in sight of Durban, and since daybreak have been moving up a really beautiful coast-line, far more fertile than anything I have hitherto seen. Perhaps the beauty lies in the grass-clothed valleys and the patches of scrub which relieve the eternal monotony of a rock-bound sand desert. The third stage of my journey will soon be closing, as I hope to leave Durban on [illegible] or Sunday, stop a day at Pietermaritzburg,

then I shall be with the troops at the Tugela river, and the gossipy and frivolous life on board ship and in Cape Town will have to be succeeded by the stern realities of actual warfare. I am just going to be lowered over the ship's side in a basket!

Feb. 16.—I am up with the Durban sun at 5.30 A.M. A handy bathroom has freshened me up, and I am sitting on the balcony of the Marine Hotel in my shirt-sleeves, while the Maine hospital ship is apparently lighting her fires for breakfast as she lies, the centre of attraction, in the inner bay or harbour which this quaint and rather stuffy hotel overlooks. A Kaffir boy, with two milk-pails on his shoulder, is making his way towards some grazing cows; half a dozen men are wading up to their middle as they drag a fishing-net through the still rippling waters; the church clock is chiming three-quarters after five; and a noisy steamer is announcing her arrival off the Bluff to the Customs' people, who, I am sure, would prefer a little longer rest after their increased labours during the past months. Anon an early bird like myself

is being drawn along the esplanade in a jinricksha by a feathered Zulu; and as the sun rises quickly in the distant east, I see around me the wooded shores of what I believe must be one of the gems of Nature's creations.

We cast anchor yesterday about 2 P.M., but it was quite 4 before we were able to get away in the tug from the Kinfauns Castle, and meanwhile Murray Gourlay, who came off on our arrival, had told me all the news he could possibly think of. The official intimation that Lord Roberts had entered the Free State did not come as a great surprise, as we had anticipated an early move on his part when he left Cape Town, but I was very sorry to hear the rumour that Buller would probably not try and relieve Ladysmith any further unless the Boers withdrew their forces (or a large part of them) to face Roberts's advance. There are all sorts of wild rumours here, but the first man I met on coming into the hotel was Mr Hutton of Reuter's, who had just succeeded in making a thrilling and exciting escape from Ladysmith, where we learn they can hold out for some weeks yet. Another story is that the I

have crossed into Zulu and Portuguese territory, are presenting English cattle from Natal to the Zulus to get them to rise against us, and that two of our resident commissioners have been compelled to fly for their lives. The last "potin" is that the Portuguese have sent troops to meet the Boers, and insist on their right to their country remaining neutral during this war. Of course, if these rumours are true (and the former probably is, as Bethune's Horse have been despatched to stop the Boers getting round our right flank), the Boers have again shown their intention of putting to the winds all the usages, customs, and treaties which international law has made respected by civilised countries.

Gourlay took me to the club, and got me elected a temporary member. He himself has got a room there — and very handy it is for meals and writing letters, though the hotels have a cunning and expensive way of doing business by charging you so much a day, *inclusive!* My first introduction to Durban is a very cheery one. Here I am among a really English colony, everybody anxious to do his

best for any visitor, and to try all they can to make your stay a pleasant one. I went with Gourlay to see Major Macormac, who is the senior officer in charge of the Army Medical Corps here, and it is a treat to find a man with every detail at his finger-tips, so unimbued with red tape, and so anxious to welcome any real additional assistance. "I will do everything in my power to assist you," he said; "and," he added, "if you do found a branch of the Absent-minded Beggar Fund, it will come at a very opportune moment. There is the greatest need for its assistance here in Durban." I had a long look over the stores in his charge, his medicine-chests and boxes of chemical and surgical appliances, and his ambulance-waggons, all ready to be despatched to the front at a moment's notice. Among these was a patent stretcher-carriage, very ingenious yet simple in device. It has proved so handy at the front that the military authorities have ordered £1000 worth of them. The invention is Major Macormac's own, and it is called the Macormac-Brook stretcher-carriage. I should think the Govern-

ment had a real treasure in this genial, kind-hearted, and obliging Irishman.

I determined after my interview, and after I had heard of the welcome the Fund would get from all sorts and conditions of people in Durban,—thanks to Murray Gourlay's work,—to wire again asking that the proposal to have a branch here should be carried out. Colonel Young of the Red Cross Society has gone away for the day to Stanger to see some tea plantations, but I am to meet him this evening and ascertain if we shall be clashing with his work if the scheme is carried out. All the goods of the Red Cross Society have gone astray—a very serious loss for them; but no doubt they will turn up again. I think Colonel Young will probably fall in with my view, and be glad that the 'Daily Mail' Fund should take charge of all the wounded soldiers going home from here. I am very strongly of opinion that the formation of this branch is a necessity. None of you know the difficulties put in the way of the doctors who may wish to supply extra luxuries to our wounded. If the doctors want something additional, they have to state in writing

their reason, the name of the patient, the quantity required, what the patient is suffering from, and so forth, and then it has to be forwarded to the Principal Medical Officer for his sanction,—naturally a long and tedious *modus operandi*. Therefore a generous, liberal relief fund, free from all such restrictions, can at the manager's request immediately supply the medical officer with anything he requires. Those at home will never realise the enormity of the work, and if Cape Town is to do it single-handed it will find that it is more than it can cope with successfully, especially when the transports lie far out in Table Bay, and only then for a few hours.

We have martial law here, so canteens are closed at 9, and all have to be indoors by 11 P.M., unless furnished with a special permit. I found the Golden Eagle here when we arrived, and soon after saw Sir Samuel Scott, with whom I dine on board to-night. Lady Sophie Scott and her brother are on board too. Sir Samuel Scott is putting up two or three invalided officers on his yacht, and giving them every care till they can get up

to the front again. I shall have to return on shore early if the following story is true. A well-known Johannesburg *habitué* had been dining on board some ship, and did not land till after 11. He was challenged by a policeman, and asked for his pass. Not having one, and having to choose between a jail or a comfortable bed, he successfully bluffed the policeman by saying, "What! you, a special constable, been here for years, and not know the medical authorities!" The policeman, much abashed, apologised, saluted, and withdrew! Needless to say, the "bluffer" was not a medical authority.

I have just heard the news of the relief of Kimberley. We all believe it to be true here, and there is great jubilation. What a splendid piece of work on French's part!

The chief means of conveyance in this town is by jinricksha. When I first got into one I thought I was going to be tipped out backwards; but that is impossible, owing to a little safety-wheel at the back. Our human horse was only showing his delight at having got a fare, and imitating a plunging animal between

the shafts. The "horses" are all Zulus, some with horns on their heads to represent buffaloes, others with feathery turbans; some with a single horn (evidently denoting rank), and others with large single feathers stuck into their thick curly cocoanuts. Some wear bangles, others earrings and anklets; and when waiting for a fare they soon recognise a stranger, and go into all sorts of antics, shouting, jumping, and whistling to attract his attention to their special 'ricksha. Once in, you are very comfortable, and these men run for hours at a jog-trot, barefooted, resting the 'ricksha now on one arm, now on the other; but few can stand the strain many years. However, most of them, having made their pile, go back again to their kraals to find a squaw, and I suppose their picaninnies are brought up to earn their living in a similar manner. One of these Zulu 'ricksha-men wore a pair of wings, indicating that he was swift as a bird — at least, he called himself Inyoni (the bird). Another advertised himself as a good horse by wearing bead anklets, about a foot in depth,

which, every time he moved, gave out a rustling sound something resembling the sh-sh-sh of a puffing engine! They are very jolly, contented fellows, and salute you by holding their hand over their head, with the first finger extended upwards; and whenever they see a picture of the Queen, they say with the deepest reverence the most honoured word in their vocabulary, "Bayete."

Feb. 17.—I was compelled to stop writing yesterday just as I had reached a very important problem which was not only trying the resources of, but causing the gravest anxiety to, our South African colonies in general. I allude to the refugees from the Transvaal, and the disbursement of the enormous sums which public charity has placed at the disposal of the authorities for their relief. Sir Alfred Milner, who was the President of the Fund, issued a warning letter to the Natal Branch intimating that very shortly there would be insufficient funds to carry out the complete organisation of the work, and that a stop would have to be put on the relief granted to able-bodied men and women. I had such opportunities afforded

me here by the Refugee Committee of inspecting the "states," and listening to the views of several men of the highest position, that I can, I think, put the desperate condition of affairs in Natal before you in a very few lines. Since the Refugee Relief Committee was inaugurated those who required to be assisted had very nearly doubled in numbers. Over 5100 men, women, and children were being housed and fed in Durban; while in Pietermaritzburg the number was well over 2000. Each man and woman was allowed shelter and 1s. a-day, and each child 6d. a-day. Something like £900 was the amount expended in Durban in carrying this out during the week I was there, and unless further money was supplied at once from London or Cape Town, there was only £450 left to carry on the work of relief! I have no doubt that the request which was made for more funds was at once complied with. The male portion of the 5100 consisted of only 1500, or rather less than one-third, but of course many of them had wives and families dependent on them. The refugees were an extraordinarily mixed community, including

quite a well-to-do class, who were probably earning £6 a-week in Johannesburg, and whose wives were only attending to the usual household duties. It also included the very riff-raff of the world—the disgrace of every town on the face of the earth,—men who live by loafing, and who, to use an expression I heard here, are "born lazy." Without entering into the merits of their several cases, I was brought face to face with the most difficult side of the problem. How long was this relief to be extended—in fact, how long could it be extended? and if it were stopped, what was to become of these destitute people? Further, how far was a country justified in supporting such desperate cases without obtaining some return for their money in the shape of work? Yet again—where was work or employment to be found, and, if found, how much reliance could be put on the gratitude as well as on the skill of this class of labourer? If you ponder over these questions you will find them conundrums difficult of solution.

The dirtiest and hardest kind of labour is performed at a very low rate by black men,

and though the town authorities tried hard, they could not find work for those of the refugees who were willing to work. Moreover, if work had been found, it was exceedingly doubtful if any but a very small percentage would have worked; and suppose they were willing to work, there would have been a still smaller number who *could* have done the task imposed on them, without necessitating the entire re-doing of the work by skilled labourers. There was absolutely no occupation here for them, unless it were the formation of a road from the harbour along the coast, which would have been of no use or advantage to the town, but only to the military authorities, and which, if authorised and paid for by Government, would probably have necessitated a subsequent complete relaying and an unnecessary waste of money. Look again at the other side of the problem, and suppose that food and lodging had been withdrawn from the sufferers, you would have found the town swamped by a hungry crowd, whose empty stomachs would have been the very first incentive to crime. The question therefore resolved itself into, Was it not

better to pay them 1s. a-day for doing nothing till the war was over, rather than risk the disturbance of the peace by a starving multitude? Was it not better for the Government here, or the Government at home, to vote and control a sum of money for this purpose, rather than waste 2s. 6d. a-day on cheap and bad labour?

I myself was disgusted to see with my own eyes able-bodied men lying on the stretcher-beds in the drill-hall in the middle of the day, reading newspapers or snoring soundly. I was still more disgusted to hear of the thanklessness of the recipients of this charitable offering. Some men were employed as stretcher-bearers, but the majority had been sent back again as invalids or incapables. But the time had come when not only could no more work be found by the town-council, but the enormously steady increase in the number of applicants was causing the greatest anxiety for the future among the town and local authorities. You wonder at the increase of the refugees? It was due to the fact that many brought sufficient clothes and money to keep themselves for three months, and

were then compelled, much against their will, to ask for help. There was no doubt that the applicants would continue increasing; there was no doubt that it was a scandal that public charity should support people who would be locked up if found begging in London; but what was to be done? Would the Government find a transport and convey many back to their friends and relations in England? This was much to be desired, as was a Government grant to assist the public charity.

The management and distribution of the funds in Durban was admirable; but organisation must fail when money is not forthcoming. So far Durban had subscribed £3000 to this particular fund, and the Lord Mayor had been responsible for donations amounting to £17,500. Yet after thirteen weeks there was only £450 left! I hope something was done at home, and that the rich and generous again put their hands into their pockets for the benefit of these refugees. I know Sir Alfred Milner did all in his power, with the assistance of Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson and the various committees, to cope with the difficulties, but his warning mes-

sage showed only too well how grave the situation had become.[1]

To turn to pleasanter subjects—I have met some of the "grand seigneurs" of Durban, and most gratefully shall I remember their many courtesies. First and foremost was Mr David Hunter and his brother James, both Edinburgh men, who years ago will be remembered as occupying high positions in Waverley Station. Now the former is the manager of the Natal Government Railways and his brother the assistant-manager. More than that, David, the elder, is recognised as one of the shrewdest and cleverest men in any civic or harbour capacity. In politics quite an old-fashioned Scotch Gladstonian, he is also a strong advocate of teetotalism,—and that for the moment reminds me I have never yet seen a case of drunkenness in South Africa. Of course, it is illegal to supply the blacks with any intoxicating liquor; and I am told that, curiously enough, when any black *is* drunk, he almost invariably calls

[1] This was written at Durban, and I have no subsequent details.

himself a Christian Kaffir! During all this war Mr Hunter has been invaluable to the military authorities, and there is little doubt that his services will be fully recognised by the Queen at a later date.[1] For instance, it was in the Government railway works that he was able to make Captain Scott's now famous gun-carriages which have played so important a part in this campaign. He was instrumental in assisting the Army Medical Corps in making stretchers, stretcher-carriages, iron and wooden splints, and a multitude of other articles; while the transport and ambulance service between Durban and the front has been magnificently carried out under his watchful eye. I hope his old friend Mr Paton, now superintendent at Waverley Station, Edinburgh, will see the few lines I have written above about a man whose popularity and genuine success have been so thoroughly recognised by every one in Durban. Then again I have met a self-made millionaire in the person of Mr Greenacre, who, as a member of the Legislative Council and a town

[1] He is now Sir David Hunter.

authority, has played no insignificant part in the affairs of Natal.

Of course, the chief meeting-place here is the Club, where gossip, cards, billiards, and meals play an important part. There you meet Mr Watt, the manager of the Bank of Africa (by the way, a Kirkcaldy man), anxious to extend his hospitality, and half-a-dozen millionaires all dining together at another table. The commandant of the town (Captain Scott of the Terrible) can be seen talking to the chief medical officer from the Maine, while elsewhere the press censor, relieved by his assistant for a few minutes, is enjoying a quiet hour of relaxation. He could tell you some interesting experiences during the war, but of course his department is as secret as the grave, though I hope that he is talking big when he suggests that he has made a valuable collection from people's letters. Brokers, merchants, visitors, soldiers, and sailors are all welcome. Here and there the Indian servants glide quietly in and out with whiskies and sodas or lemon-squashes, while the head steward regards the whole

as sedately as he did twenty-two years ago. It is a comfortable, cheery little club-house, but it is soon to be replaced by a more commodious building. I strongly recommend the Marine Hotel to any visitor.

Yacht-racing and flat-racing are going on as usual, and you might never realise there was a great war raging within 200 miles of you, were it not that in the harbour the Red Cross flag is flying over four ships which are full of our wounded soldiers, and that the town is under military law and a press censor. I am dining on the Maine to-night, where Jack Churchill, very slightly wounded, is being nursed by his mother; and I may hear more stories of how Spion Kop would have been a great victory if only the advantage gained had been followed up, instead of the troops being withdrawn after the worst was over. But these are secrets, and I fear the censor!

We left Durban by the 2.12 A.M. train on Monday morning, after having paid the Maine a visit the previous day. Lady Randolph Churchill showed me over the wards, and everything was beautifully clean and com-

fortable; but she is not an ideal ship for a hospital, as there is so much lumber on her decks that the men get little space and opportunity to move about in the fresh air, and her 'tween decks are very low—so low, indeed, that a man of six feet two inches cannot pass through with any comfort. Of course she was a cattle boat, and it reflects great credit on those who took her in charge that the work done and the money spent on her have made her as comfortable as she is. Miss Warrender and Lady Randolph both personally superintended the work, and the wounded officers as well as the men must have had a very good time of it. I saw young Jack Churchill, very pleased with his wound, which was only slight. He had done capitally during the short time he was at the front.

You must be tired of hospitals and refugees, but there was practically nothing else to see, and I cannot leave the subject without paying Durban, and Colonel Hodder in particular, a special compliment on the way they had fitted up the Nubia. She lay just inside the bar, with the Red Cross flag flying at her peak.

Her inner arrangements for the wounded were as spick and span as was the outer coating of white paint which glistened in the sunshine, making all who entered the harbour ask her name. This ship was fitted throughout by Durban people, under the direction of Colonel Hodder, a retired army medical man; and he, who had the entire control of her, may justly be proud of the work he has done. The iron castings and fittings were only another example of the wonderful assistance the Natal Government railways' workshops under Mr Hunter were able to provide.

The last man I saw before leaving Durban was Mr Ernest Acutt, one of Durban's richest and best citizens, who had provided no less than 150 beds at the up-country hospitals for the Government, out of his own pocket. All honour to him! And now I am at Maritzburg —only a step nearer my goal, and fretting at my enforced delay.

CHAPTER VI.

AT PIETERMARITZBURG.

A REBUFF—SIR WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON—KIND FRIENDS—CLAIMANTS FOR A THRONE—HOWICK—MORE ABOUT THE REFUGEES—NEWS FROM THE FREE STATE—I AM OFFERED A COMMISSION IN THORNEYCROFT'S—MORE OFFICIAL RED-TAPE—I LEAVE FOR THE FRONT.

Feb. 22.—We got to Maritzburg on Monday morning at 9 A.M., after a very comfortable journey, due no doubt to the free pass the manager of the railway gave us and a reserved sleeping-carriage. We put up at the Imperial Hotel, which could hardly boast the same reputation as a hostelry that the Marine and Ocean View at Durban and the Mount Nelson at Cape Town did. After a bit of breakfast I hurried off to see the commandant of the town (Colonel Martin of

Omdurman fame), to get our passes to the front. Colonel Martin referred me to General Wolfe Murray, of the lines of communication staff, and to him I presented Lord Roberts's letter. "I cannot pass you," he said, "without telegraphing for General Buller's permission." Here was a facer! In vain I remonstrated, and pointed out the fact that Lord Roberts had left the letter open in order that we might have no difficulty in getting through the lines of communication. It was no use; and here I am, five days after General Murray had telegraphed, without any reply from the front — an enforced prisoner in the capital of Natal, and not 100 miles from Ladysmith. It is too annoying.

After this little episode I went to call on the Governor. Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson was at home, and received me most kindly. It was in his house that "His Excellency the Governor" was written, the second play I ever acted in professionally, and we therefore had a mutual topic of conversation in Captain Marshall, the author, who was formerly the Governor's aide-de-camp. Government H

is a very charming one (Sir Walter calls it a glorified rectory). There are nice gardens, lawn-tennis courts, and new stables, which the Governor takes almost as great an interest in as he does in flowers. I lunched and dined with him on Monday; and when the Durban branch of the Absent-minded Beggar Fund is started, Sir Walter has gladly granted it his patronage.

There is not much to see in Maritzburg, but one meets a great many interesting people, all anxious to make one's visit a pleasant one. Amongst these I have to thank Mr Payn, the deputy mayor, for a little dinner he gave us, when I had the pleasure of meeting the premier (Colonel Hime), and Mr Clark, head of the college here, and District Grand Master of the masonic craft. I also met the permanent Under-Secretary for the Colony (Mr Bird), and Mr Loram, the Castle Company's manager, who very kindly took us out to Howick on Wednesday to see the falls, which are magnificent. Howick is a small village on the main line to Pretoria, about 17 miles from Maritzburg, but it took us over an hour and a half to get there.

The train has to wind its way like a serpent first east, then north, now west, now south, up this hilly line, the gradient of which is something like 1 in 30. At one moment Pietermaritzburg was far astern of us, at another it seemed to be just ahead; but it is a magnificent country, and the landscape quite the best in Natal. On our way there we passed a number of mounted Zulus on their way into Maritzburg, where the court was sitting to judge between the rival claimants for the chieftainship of the tribe, which had become vacant by the death of Tetoluku. The legal business in this line is very good out here —indeed, it must almost rival Edinburgh—but blacks have to pay their counsel's fees in advance, which in some cases amount to £200. They willingly abide by the decision of the court, which is composed of three white magistrates.

We passed on our way up to Howick one of the largest wattle plantations in the world. The bark is in enormous demand for tanning purposes, and the wood is chiefly used for building and pit props. Just now the wood is fetching about £2 a ton. You would be surprised to see the wonderful green fertility of this country

compared with the Karoo district of Cape Colony; and one of the greatest attractions was the extraordinarily brilliant assortment of butterflies. I have never seen such beautiful specimens, and they must certainly rival those of India. I met Mr Sutton and Dr Wylie up in Howick. The former, who used to be the town treasurer, told me the Government had commandeered his waggons (with bullocks and drivers) for 35s. apiece per diem. He had no idea where they were, or if he would ever see them again, but the price seemed a fair one. We reached home, after a capital picnic, at about five o'clock.

The Mayor of Maritzburg has been locked up in Ladysmith ever since the siege began, so Mr Payn has had all the onerous duties of mayoralty to perform, and is very popular in the town. I had a long talk with him, as chairman of the Refugee Relief Committee in Maritzburg; and though I have already dealt with the subject from the Durban point of view, I think it well to note how great the distress was here, and how much assistance was still needed. The returns again

show an increase of refugees on the previous week; and though the total number was only 3043 as compared with 5000 at Durban, that number was almost entirely composed of women and children—there being only 370 able-bodied men on the relief roll. Here again, owing to lack of material, there was practically no work to be found for these men, and I am sorry to say that, even if there had been, it was unlikely all would accept it at the trifling remuneration they would get. I am in no sympathy with this class of individual; but we are a nation of tender hearts, and we have a duty to perform in sheltering and feeding these homeless and starving people. Maritzburg, too, was very unfortunate in being unable to supply anything like the adequate shelter Durban had been able to do for the majority. The expense, therefore, of hiring accommodation was no small one; but the Relief Committee started a little cheap restaurant, where those who wished to be fed, and well fed, could obtain free meals in lieu of the 1s. a-day which they were allowed. The local collections announced in print

amounted to only £800, but much private assistance had been forthcoming; and the fact must not be lost sight of that, situated as Maritzburg was, so close to the scene of operations, robbed as she had undoubtedly been of her chief trade with the Transvaal and northern Natal, and supplying as she had done enormous assistance to the Imperial troops by means of the Natal Volunteers and other auxiliary forces, she was in a far worse position than the sea-port town of Durban.

My day was spent in writing and looking over the chief places of interest, of which there are not many, if I except the hospitals. It was not very hot at Maritzburg, and the Victoria Club was very cool and comfortable, and the centre of all social reunion and gossip. Apart from the military life, which was naturally a stirring one, the town seemed very quiet, as almost all Government and town contracts had been cancelled for want of material from the north. The stock exchange and general merchants seemed to monopolise all the business there was, and in the evening billiards and cards were the chief amusements. The 'ricksha men

had a busy though rather hard time of it, as the town is very hilly, and seemed to be inundated with Indian men and women, who, with the Zulus, did all the hard, dirty, and unskilled work. Bullock waggons, with spans of eight, sixteen, and sometimes thirty-two oxen, were seen everywhere, and the ponies were certainly not bought or sold for their looks! The town-hall, which was burnt down nearly two years ago, was in course of rebuilding; and the Legislative Assembly buildings, where Parliament meets, had been converted into an auxiliary military hospital, and an excellent one it made. The buildings were irregular, and not very imposing, but the roads for the most part were admirably well kept. The cemetery was, alas! almost outgrowing its limit, and every day saw a funeral of some poor soldier who had succumbed to his wounds. Flags were being overhauled at street doors, in readiness for the news of the relief of Ladysmith.

Mr Hunter, the general manager of the Natal Railway, had just returned from taking the first train into Colenso since September.

He told me two dead horses were found in the booking-office, that the bridge had been completely destroyed, but that he hoped to have a trestle bridge finished over the Tugela in about three weeks. He said there was a sharp artillery duel in progress while he was there yesterday, and it is more than likely we shall be in Ladysmith before Sunday. We have just got the first news of the great battle near the Modder river, when Cronje's retreat was cut off. It is graphically written, and though no definite result is yet to hand, there seems little doubt that Cronje is cornered and must die or surrender, but I fear it has been an expensive fight for us. Richard Harding Davis, the accredited 'Daily Mail' correspondent with Buller's force, has just passed through from England covered with medals—what for I do not know—and I have put him on to a chap where he can get a horse. Meanwhile I sit patiently waiting either for a telegram from Buller saying we may come up as onlookers, or from Lord Dundonald that he will take me as galloper. Failing this, I am up a tree, and must either return to Cape Town or make a

trek into Basutoland on my own account. I wonder which it will be.

Feb. 25.—Late last night I received a telegram from Colonel Thorneycroft offering me a commission in his regiment, but too late, unfortunately, to catch the last train. I immediately went to General Wolfe Murray, who snubbed me a second time by saying he could not grant me a pass without confirmation from the staff officer, as Colonel Thorneycroft had no power to give commissions. More red-tape! Mad with annoyance, I wired Thorneycroft I was still detained, and got the General to telegraph to the staff officer with Buller to confirm. Meanwhile I set about preparing for my departure, determined in any case to get through somehow. The joy of going to the front was quite eclipsed by the honour of a commission in Thorneycroft's. Early this morning a telegram came to me from Lord Dundonald, "You have been given a commission in Thorneycroft's; report yourself to him immediately." At the same time General Wolfe Murray sent me down a telegram from General Buller saying, "Rosslyn may proceed to the

front on condition he does not correspond with any paper"! But I did not care much for this, seeing that I was going to take my little share in the fighting, and my only dread was that Ladysmith might be relieved before I got up to the front. The day seemed to drag fearfully till the night mail left; and having wired Colonel Stevenson to send me up a horse from the remount department, I started full of happiness for Chieveley, where I arrived at 6 A.M. on Monday morning, February 26.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RELIEF OF LADYSMITH.

IN CAMP WITH THE T. M. I.—A WEIRD MEAL STAND TO YOUR HORSES!—THE BATTLE OF PIETERS HILL. FINE WORK OF THE NAVAL GUNS—BRINGING IN THE WOUNDED A PITIFUL TALE—A GENEROUS ACT INTO LADYSMITH A POURING WET NIGHT.

March 2.—I have been four days at the front And what an experience! Most of us have seen, and many taken part in, either manœuvres or a week under canvas, "playing at soldiers"; but few have had the opportunity of realising the true condition of camp life in time of war, and assuredly it is as different from the make believe as the grasshopper is from the locust, or a pane of glass from the magnifying lens.

I had swallowed some [illegible] and sandwiches, which I had [illegible]

in case of accidents, when the train drew up at the little station of Chieveley, lying amid a honeycomb of white tents. I had joined the T. M. I. (Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, by which abbreviated letters I shall in future allude to them), and was once more a soldier, a little atom in a giant army. I asked where the T. M. I. camp was. Fortunately the questioned one was the sergeant of that regiment's depot, and he directed me to where, after a walk of a mile on a delicious morning, I found Captain Chipman (the regimental paymaster) and Captain Knapp, with a small number of men, waggons, and horses. They very kindly gave me breakfast, and the latter, who was going to the main camp, took me with him after I had, by the greatest of luck, got my horse, which came into the station just before we left.

The bivouac of the T. M. I. was about ten miles off, on the slope of the now famous Mount Cingolo, and about six miles south-east of Colenso. The colonel gave me a hearty welcome, and I met Bertie Rose (Charlie Rose's son), whom I had previously known, and who,

to my deep sorrow, is now no more. Thanks to the officers' kindness, I was soon at home, but was not long in discovering that I had brought too much kit for a soldier. My tent was like a marquee compared to the three or four lean-to's some of the officers had, and many were sleeping in the open air on their waterproof sheets and blankets. However, I have been allowed to keep it, and when the supply waggons are in camp, which is very rare, I shall be able to use it. The difficulty, of course, is in its transport. I am sharing it with Captain Boyd Wilson, who was originally in the Inniskilling Dragoons, and to whose company I have been attached.

I don't think I shall ever forget the weird sight presented by our first meal in camp at dinner-time. A large tarpaulin had been tied to two trees, and a post held it up in the centre. Numerous boxes formed the chairs and tables, and to the light of half-a-dozen candle-lanterns we set to work on as excellent a dinner as circumstances would permit. Whisky and soda had not then run out, but latterly it has been an unknown quantity! We had tinned soup,

chicken and rice, and roast sucking-pig off an animal whose death I witnessed a few hours before. Mugs were passed round, as the demand for these exceeded the supply, and bowls and dishes were frequently washed to get through the courses. Bread has only been supplied once, but hard ration biscuits make very efficient substitutes for filling up the cracks.

Dinner over, we soon turned in, expecting Tuesday would be an easy day; but officers and men slept booted and spurred, and sure enough it was necessary, as the camp was roused at 4.30 A.M. and parade ordered "in half an hour." "Ammunition horses to be saddled" was an order given, and while we rushed, lantern in hand, to get a cup of tea and a biscuit, the general impression was that we should only be called on to reconnoitre, and that our camping-ground would remain unchanged. "Stand to your horses! Prepare to mount! Mount!" and away we went into the grey morning towards Schlangwane and Monte Cristo, which two hills formed part of our captures the day we took Cingolo. As we moved into the plain a big gun away on our left opened fire, then another and

another, and at once a staff officer galloped up with instructions that the 2nd Cavalry Brigade was to occupy Monte Cristo and the plain below to protect the naval guns, which were posted there on our right flank. Then we knew there was to be a battle!

It soon leaked out that a pontoon was to be thrown across the Tugela river for General Barton's brigade to cross, and by the time we had reached the summit of Monte Cristo the artillery was hard at work. One gun became six guns, and for all I know six guns became sixty, so incessant was the roar. And from the splendid position we occupied we could see shrapnel bursting with unerring aim among the opposite kopjes, and the lyddite shells exploding with their green smoke as they dealt havoc in the enemies' trenches; while the perpetual pitter-patter of the Colt and Maxim guns told me we were searching the hills and clearing the way for a great infantry advance. Suddenly, as I watched the grand panorama, I saw a shell burst close down to the river, then another and another, and I soon found that the enemy was enfilading the pontoon-

bridge builders. But where was the gun? That was one of the extraordinary features of the battle. Search where we would, it was very rarely we could define their position; and ours was just as invisible, except when in two or three cases black powder was being used in place of the smokeless cordite. Soon a distant boom told us that the great 6-inch gun, throwing a 100-lb. shell, was being fired from Chieveley, fully six miles in our rear; and as the day wore on and the cannonade became more furious than ever, we saw creeping along the river bank, towards the right of our position, regiment after regiment of our splendid soldiers ready to develop the attack. A rattle of musketry on the left indicated that we were trying to divert the enemies' attention from our right, and then in extended order from the right and left and from the centre, followed by their supports and reserves, our infantry rushed the first positions, and were soon engaged in deadly earnest with the invisible Boers. Madly and desperately they fought, having hitherto concealed their positions, and risked the chance of death, like rats in their

holes. But now or never they had to face us and retire or be cut off.

Position by position we carried, sometimes at the point of the bayonet, and ever and again I saw hastily summoned reinforcements galloping to the Boer trenches, only to fall back from our terrible artillery fire. The hills on the other side seemed to be aflame, and yet there was no diminution in the energy of our guns. Now I heard the distant cheer of our men as they captured Hart's Hill; and then in the distance, from the direction of Nelthorpe, I saw, with hair on end, a desperate effort to surround one of our positions. It was the anniversary of Majuba, and I held my breath as I heard the command from one of the naval officers: "Turn the guns on to those men—sight them at 5300 yards." Bang! Bang! Bang! The noise was deafening. But right into the scrub where the Boer horsemen were preparing to open fire the shells burst with splendid accuracy. Away they went galloping across the open plain, saddle after saddle emptied; and as the daylight disappeared, and the fire of the enemy's pom-pom grew less and less, we knew

that the day was ours, and that our troops had done all that had been asked of them in the battle which will probably earn the name of Pieters Hill. For our own part, we were only sniped at occasionally, the ping of the bullets being uncommonly close; but I was in luck's way in seeing one of the greatest battles, and, as others say, the most tremendous artillery display, of the present war in Natal.

I do not pretend to know the magnitude of the opposing force. It was invisible until our infantry developed the attack, when the Boers could be clearly seen retiring and reinforcements coming up, but I am sure of two things: (1) that the enemy's position could have been held by a very small force, so difficult was it to attack; and (2) whatever effect our artillery fire must have had where it fell, many of our own men must have lost life or limb through it, so impossible is it to distinguish friend from foe in an attack of such magnitude. In all humility I venture an opinion that the Boers fought a very fine rearguard action to give them time to remove their transport and guns to some other position, and they probably

THE BATTLE OF PIETERS HILL, 27TH FEBRUARY.

KLIP RIVER BOMB-PROOF SHELTERS AT LADYSMITH

did so in order to relieve a portion of their force who might go to the rescue of their heterogeneous allies in the Free State. In fact, the Boers relieved Ladysmith of their own account, and not from any defeat by General Buller's force, though in no way does this detract from the credit our troops deserve for their extraordinarily gallant conduct.

We got orders to return to camp at 6 P.M., but to be at the new pontoon bridge before daylight, in order to hold it against any possible attack. So off we galloped, only to find all our baggage, supply waggons, and tents packed up! After a lime-juice and water and a hard biscuit standing up in the darkness, I threw myself on the ground to get what sleep I could.

Breakfastless next morning, for there was no water in the camp, we arrived before 7 A.M. at the pontoon bridge. This was on Wednesday morning, February 28. Here we found artillery, irregular horse, and infantry all packed like sardines, waiting their turn to cross the Tugela. Far up on the opposite hills we noticed, to our relief, our infantry

holding the positions they had so gallantly taken, and knew that this time at least we were not to retire from the ground we had gained—though, *apropos* of this, I was subsequently told by an officer that General Buller had ordered a retirement before he learnt from Generals Hart and Barton that no enemy was in sight, and that they were in possession of the hills!

General Buller was on the opposite bank with his staff when we moved off, passing on our way a gang of Boer prisoners we had captured, and the stretcher-bearers bringing in the wounded. Poor fellows! they deserved the sympathy they received. One wounded Boer was absolutely yellow-green from the lyddite, and I am afraid he was terribly wounded. The hills over which we advanced showed the fearful havoc our artillery fire had created. The ground was strewn with shells and shrapnel bullets, and the stench of dead horses and cattle was perfectly horrible. In one trench the headless trunk of a Boer bore testimony to the efficiency with which our guns had been served. Not

far away the stretcher-bearers were burying a young woman barely twenty-one years of age. There she was a proud one. She had been found lying in the trenches, bandolier across her breast and rifle in hand, and as she died she told them her husband had forced her to fight as she was such a good shot. How shockingly cruel! But against this I may relate another story in favour of the Boers. In one of the recent fights in which the Inniskilling Fusiliers were heavy losers, there were but two officers and two men left to be surrendered by the Boers. One of the officers recounted to me the following narrative. He fell into the hands of De Wet, one of the fighting generals, and asked for water for his wounded men. Ten orderlies were at once told off to fetch water for the water-bottles, and with his own hands De Wet fastened on this officer's arm a white handkerchief, and told him he could go about his wounded without fear of being shot. So instead of being made a prisoner, he was able to perform his errand of mercy.

Boer tents, carts, provisions, and ammunition

were strewn on all sides, and it was reported that the enemy had gone, never to return. There was one curiosity that caught my eye, a tin case of ammunition labelled

"KYNOCH'S EXPLOSIVE SPORTING AMMUNITION—BIRMINGHAM."

A patrol of Thorneycroft's had not gone out five minutes, however, before it was attacked from a donga, and five horses had to be reckoned among the killed. It was a day of reconnaissance only, though we drew the Boer shell fire for an hour or two from Bulwana, and on one occasion were nearly hit. But our work done, we found Ladysmith was relieved, and the road open. Lord Dundonald and a few of his brigade rode in that night, while we returned in the darkness to a camp this side of the river, to face a pouring wet night, accompanied by the most vivid lightning I have ever witnessed. I found a corner inside a waggon, and when the rain stopped I threw myself on my Wolseley valise on the ground, and slept as well as I could under the circumstances.

CHAPTER VIII.

WITH THORNEYCROFT'S AT LADYSMITH.

LEACH OF THE T. M. I.—MY SERVANT DISAPPEARS—I RIDE INTO LADYSMITH—VISIT TO INTOMBI NEUTRAL HOSPITAL—ITS TERRIBLE CONDITION — A LUNCH OFF HORSE-FLESH WITH CAPTAIN LAMBTON — GENERAL BULLER'S STORES — THE GENERAL PAYS NO HEED TO LORD ROBERTS'S REQUEST— HE TAKES HIS ORDERS FROM THE WAR OFFICE — OLD FRIENDS—THE KLIP RIVER BANKS—THE FAMOUS DAM—THORNEYCROFT'S MOUNTED INFANTRY.

March 4.—I brought you in my last chapter to our night bivouac on the north side of the Tugela on Wednesday evening, February 28. I was unpleasantly reminded, in the chilly dark morning of March 1, that I was lying on the enemy's battlefield by the stench of a too proximate dead horse, and, after vainly endeavouring to read my watch, an increasing buzz of voices warned me that

my servant was more dilatory than I, and that it was time I was astir. That blessed cook of the T. M. I.—Leach by name, who could fight as well as he could cook on nothing—had got a splendid breakfast ready; and if the tea resembled pea-soup, it was at least too dark to distinguish in drinking.

I had finished breakfast by 5 A.M. before my civilian servant Harvey, late of the 20th Hussars, and who had been my dresser at the Court Theatre, put in an appearance, and I was consequently late on parade; but I had a clinking horse, an iron grey nearly 16 hands high (too big really for the country), which was equal to the emergency, and I soon found myself with the regiment—struggling through team after team of transport and ammunition waggons, till daylight proclaimed us well on our way towards, but slightly to the left of, Pieters station. We knew Ladysmith with its roads and communications was open, and all we had to do was to patrol and carefully examine the country on our left flank; and by midday we were dismounted and waiting orders under the northern spur of Grobler's Kloof. The

colonel decided to form camp there, and after sitting in a broiling sun, and discussing the possibilities of the future and reconnoitring neighbouring deserted Boer camps, we dined and "turned in," prepared for another wet night. This time I had my tent pitched, but not by my servant, who, for some unaccountable reason, had disappeared. He was last seen on a Government pony with my kodak in his hand; but, worst of all, he had all my money, and the original of Lord Roberts's letter to Sir Redvers Buller asking his courtesy to allow me to witness the operations and write my diary. The want of money, coupled with my having to leave Murray [illegible] behind when I joined Thorneycroft's, brings me to the third reason why I am at Maritzburg on two days' leave.

I rose on Friday and [illegible] with a [illegible] heart—at least it felt that way, for I had not [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] fighting and [illegible] ing camp. Having obtained Colonel Thorneycroft's permission, I decided to go [illegible] dry my damp clothes and look for General Buller. I made for [illegible] camp, where I reached

was at Nelthorpe, but found one of his staff officers, who told me the General had gone up Bulwana Mountain to see the country, and that Colonel Miles, his chief of staff, had ridden down the railway to Ladysmith. I was not long in making up my mind, and took a "bee-line" over the hills to where I thought Ladysmith was. I was not far wrong in my direction, and at the top of a nek I saw the now famous little town some five miles below me; and down at my feet, about two miles distant, were the white tents of the Intombi neutral hospital, where I knew most of our sick and wounded were lying. A precipitous ride brought me to the railway, and I was soon with the hospital P. M. O., of whom I inquired if the 'Daily Mail' fund could be of service for luxuries for the wounded. I promised nothing, except a telegram to London, which was gladly accepted, and then I rode on to see Sir George White, to get the message sent by Government heliograph. But before I left I saw poor young Bond (Mr W. H. Bond's son, who came out with me). His thigh was setting well, and he was very cheery.

The signs of [illegible] and [illegible] endurance were [illegible] dysentery, and [illegible] the orderlies and [illegible] Corps. "We [illegible] there," said [illegible] patch of [illegible] earth and [illegible] more in [illegible]—in fact, I may say [illegible]—to give them. [illegible] rations, [illegible] was [illegible] the [illegible] I galloped [illegible] that the [illegible] ear [illegible] Churchill [illegible] White, [illegible] as one [illegible] while I [illegible] back. [illegible] General [illegible] General [illegible] "make [illegible]

the 'Daily Mail,' and I will send it by heliograph"; and then, gaunt but soldier-like, he hurried off to welcome General Buller, who had just been signalled approaching Ladysmith from Bulwana. I rode some of the way with him, and turned off to where Hedworth Lambton and the Naval Brigade were quartered, to give him a letter I had got from his brother at Groot Schuur. There they were, shaded by some trees, sitting in comfortable cane chairs, eagerly scanning each passer-by, and glad to meet any new-comer. The man who came in the nick of time with his guns from the Powerful was looking thin but fairly well, and insisted on my lunching with him. They had had no letters for four months, and nearly choked over the tiniest scraps of news I was able to give them. I ate an excellent lunch, and found when it was over that I had been treated to —horseflesh!

General Buller came in while I was there, and his own transport showed that he had plenty of stores behind him, as the waggons were unloaded at his temporary headquarters—the Convent. I learnt that he was receiving an address

from the Mayor and citizens of Ladysmith, and I then hurried off to catch him after lunch (a good hour, I was told), to unfold my tale of woe, and ask permission (*per Lord Roberts's letter*) to write my weekly diary while in his camp. He was out, but his military secretary, Colonel Stopford, promised to put the matter again before him, and get him to amend the order he had already given—namely, "that I might proceed to the front provided I did not contribute to any newspaper whatever."

As I came out I met the victorious general himself, with Billy Gerard, his aide-de-camp and *maître d'hôtel*, in close attendance. In a word I told the latter of my mission. "Wait a minute," he said; "you'll catch him in a good mood — he's just had an excellent lunch." I waited. The great man never turned his head. "I gave you permission on certain conditions," he began, and I allowed it. I only begged for those conditions to be revoked. In vain I pleaded with Lord Roberts's letter. "It was not from him personally," he said; "it was signed by his military secretary — there was nothing in it. I don't take my orders from

Lord Roberts, I take them from the War Office. If they allow you, I have no objection. If I give you permission, I shall have to allow others." I dared not spoil the game for others, so I did not mention the three or four officers I knew who were writing diaries for the papers. I saluted (I should have liked to have done something else), and with a word that I would wire to the War Office, I left him and rode through the town with Hedworth Lambton. We called on "Old Brock," as the ex-colonel of the Blues is so well named, and Johnny Willoughby; but only Crichton was at home, looking thin and pulled down after enteric fever, and passing by the cemetery I stopped for a moment at the grave of poor Steevens (of the 'Daily Mail') and that of Lord Ava, whose deaths have been so deeply deplored. A note I left with an officer of the Gordons, and then I had a look at the river's banks.

The Klip had actually been made into a living place, and like water-rats, during the siege, the inhabitants of Ladysmith, archdeacon and all, had built themselves little bomb-proof shelters on the banks, where from

early dawn till night they lived, returning only to their beds when the daily bombardment had subsided. The town had been severely shelled, and in any case does not lie very healthily; but I do not think it was as severely mauled as the village of Colenso. Johnny Willoughby seems to have been the sensible man. From the day the siege began he became a gardener, and as he couldn't grow tobacco, which he loves, he grew vegetables!

I had to gallop to the hospital again and get the telegram for the luxuries of the wounded sent off, in order that I might reach camp before dark, and then along the railway towards Nelthorpe I started after a thoroughly interesting day.

As I rode down the line I saw the first breakdown train entering Ladysmith — three engines and hundreds of coolies and some haulage and lifting plant; and a little farther on I came to the now famous "attempted dam." It was a miraculous attempt. Thousands of sandbags, at least forty feet above the water's edge, some sixty feet wide, and some seventy or eighty feet across the river, had been the

means of constructing the greater part of a bridge over the Klip river. Whether the Boers would have succeeded in flooding Ladysmith is doubtful, but the unaccomplished attempt was worthy of a greater strategist. I am told some 500 men were daily employed in this work, and the Boers evidently did not care whether they shot or drowned us in their attempt to destroy the "verdomte Rooinek"!

I hit my old camping-ground off right enough, but the camp itself had been struck, and following some fresh waggon-tracks, I found myself four miles farther on at home again on a beautiful plain, where the turtle-dove cared nought for shrapnel and the partridge took the place of vulture. Away again was the order yesterday (March 3). We are to pitch our camp for several days at least, some three miles north of Ladysmith; but I am at Maritzburg, wiring to the War Office, trying to get some money, and arranging with Murray Gourlay as to our future campaign.

Only a brief summary. I am very happy with Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry. The officers, and the colonel in particular, are

clinkers. We had a rough time, and the men — Uitlanders and non-Uitlanders — were game as pebbles, for ever marching, for ever working, for *never* sleeping, eating, or drinking. They were a handy lot indeed of irregulars, and rightly do they deserve their name. No humbug about drill or appearance. "You must shoot," says the colonel; "you must ride," he adds; and, "hang it, you must respect discipline." I don't want to serve under any other colonel, but on the War Office telegram depends my future. I don't like war, but it is good for any young man to rough it. I don't like smells, but you can't get rid of that one sense on a battlefield. I don't like the hard ground of South Africa, but air-cushions were only made for invalids and milksops. I like champagne and port—so do we all—but where are they to come from? I want letters and papers, but the regimental post-corporal can't find any. Never mind! It's all the same with Tommy Atkins and the officers. I only want to be in Thorneycroft's and *see the fun.* Yes, they're the best lot of fellows in the world. Only think of Spion Kop! I wish I had been there.

CHAPTER IX.

BACK IN CAMP AGAIN.

REJOICING AT MARITZBURG—THE ONDERSPRUIT ROAD—RESULTS OF BATTLE—A COMFORTABLE CAMP—A LOOK AT LADYSMITH—IRREGULAR FORCES—MY SERVANT REAPPEARS.

March 8.—I am glad to be back in my tent again, as Maritzburg is a dead-alive kind of place; but my short visit, to see Gourlay and arrange for the future, gave me at least an insight into the loyalty of the town, if I can judge it by the consumption of champagne and the display of flags and banners. Truly the ecstasies of London and other interested towns can be shared in by Maritzburg, and though I was not there (as you know) the day the news arrived, the relief of Ladysmith was of sufficient importance to demand speeches from the governor and prime minister, proces-

sions to the various leading magnates' residences, thanksgiving services, and the relaxation of the laws which order "that in the event of a man being found drunk and incapable he shall," &c. But that latter ebullition of sound government was a matter-of-course, as no one could possibly know if his neighbour was suffering from alcoholic poisoning or the release of his pent-up feelings at the good news.

I did not succeed in getting a step further in my negotiations with the War Office, and am even now waiting their permission to write for the papers; so I am back again with my regiment, hoping to stay, but absolutely uncertain as to what the morrow will bring forth. The fact is, I think Lord Roberts's request is sufficient safeguard to any breach of General Buller's orders, but as we are not likely to advance for some time, it is possible Lord Roberts may solve the difficulty, and let me come to him, as Colonel Thorneycroft quite understood my position as regarded my contract with the 'Daily Mail,' and has not yet gazetted my commission in case I leave him.

I met Colonel Rhodes in Maritzburg, and General Ian Hamilton, just down from Ladysmith: I am afraid the latter is feeling the effects of his enforced incarceration, but I believe he goes round to Lord Roberts, which will probably do him good.

I came back here on Tuesday night, and rode from Colenso by the Onderspruit road, about eighteen miles—one of the most interesting rides I have ever done, as it was on this road the Boers attacked us, on this road they intrenched themselves, and by this road they made their main retirement. The road runs round the back of Grobler's Kloof, and enters Ladysmith after a wide detour from the north-west. Their trenches and sangars were perfectly marvellous, and the Kaffirs or Zulus, who probably had to carry out the work under the lash, had made a splendid job of it. In some cases, in order to deceive our range-finders, the excavated earth had been carried 50 to 100 yards forward or back from the actual trenches, so that the shells bursting on these earthworks did no actual damage to the men in the trenches. The trenches themselves, too, were in many

instances works of art, the top of them so narrow that a big man would have to squeeze his way in, while at the base they were wide and roomy, forming by this means a very adequate bomb-proof shelter.

I passed on my way a demolished cottage—the work of our guns; and it was evidently here that the Boers had placed a battery, judging from the many empty gun-cartridges lying about, some of which I carried off as trophies—mementos of my first battle. I found the place where the dreaded pom-pom had been hidden from our view, but no cartridges were there, only the straw in which each shell is wrapped. Here and there the vultures, soaring high in the still blue heavens, were anticipating a morning meal from one of the numerous dead carcasses, and the road itself was a mass of holes and rocks dislodged by our lyddite shells.

I reached camp about midday, and found it in the most divine spot. Moreover, in anticipation of at least ten days' idleness, the mess-tent is pitched, as well as all the officers' and men's, and soldiering in this way can in no sense be called a hardship. Here as I sit

writing in my tent, with two boxes for my writing-table and one of the chairs from the mess-tent to sit upon, I can see gleaming in the morning sun the white crag which overhangs Van Reenen's Pass, and on the other sides the now famous Bulwana, Cæsar's, and Waggon Hills. Ladysmith itself is just hidden from my view by a small kopje, but far down over a big broad valley I can hear the oxen lowing and the mules neighing as they chew the fresh green grass and feel the joy and contentment of a well-earned rest. Close by me the cook is cleaning up the breakfast things, the servants tidying up their masters' tents, and the farriers busy with their forge. The horses of one of the companies are going down to water, and some mules are being inspanned to the Scotch cart, while the quiet laziness of a noon-day sun is pervading the rest of the camp,—truly a make-believe that the whole world is at peace!

We are quite a big mess just now, though several officers are still invalids or on leave; and yesterday the colonel had the officers of his old regiment, the Scots Fusiliers, to lunch

with us. It was they who, with the South Lancashires, did so well at Pieters Hill; but they have had to pay for it, poor chaps—over 100 killed and wounded men and ten officers. Writing of them reminds me of a very interesting story. They have at this moment in their camp, which is close by us, the old union-jack which in 1881 was flying over Pretoria when the disgraceful peace of Majuba was made. Here it is again, and General Buller knows it. It should not be his fault nor that of the Scots Fusiliers if they do not hoist it again, this time for ever, over the Transvaal capital.

I rode into Ladysmith yesterday afternoon and had a cup of tea with the Leicesters: they were in a rather bad way, but most cheery. Then I went down to see General Brocklehurst, whom I found at the cavalry headquarters with Johnny Willoughby. One of the first questions I was asked was why the T. M. I. had not taken part in the procession of Buller's troops through Ladysmith last Saturday. I was not there myself that day, but it appears that the whole of Lord Dundonald's brigade, composed as it is almost entirely of Colonials and Uitlanders,

were omitted from the programme. There is considerable comment on this, and no little ill-feeling has been aroused, as this is not the first time this splendid body of irregulars has been overlooked. After Spion Kop General Buller went round to every camp and said something nice, but the heroes of the battle (this regiment) and the rest of Dundonald's brigade were absolutely ignored. Let us hope it has been an oversight (though few believe it to be anything but an intentional slight), as we can ill afford in these days to treat our Colonial forces who have come so grandly to the Empire's aid with such scant courtesy. I wish you could have seen Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, the South African Light Horse, or the Natal Carabineers. They don't go in for dress, but they look like business, and good work have they done already. I hear that the Imperial Light Horse have gained a tremendous reputation for their gallant conduct while in Ladysmith. But enough!

Our brigade post-corporal is erratic in visiting the post-office, and newspapers and mails come at very uncertain times. When

they do come, what a rush there is for them! It is said that Sir Charles Warren leaves with two brigades for Stormberg, and we and the old Ladysmith garrison are to stay and recruit and refit—I hope not for too long. By the way, my servant has turned up again. He seems to have lost himself, and was almost the first into Ladysmith.

CHAPTER X.

ON PATROL WITH THORNEYCROFT'S.

MAJOR-GENERAL LORD DUNDONALD—I TAKE A DETACHMENT TO ACTON HOMES—LOOTING—A KAFFIR KRAAL—AN UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION—THE UPPER TUGELA MAGISTRACY—DR JONES—A NERVOUS MAGISTRATE—UNDER THE SHADOW OF SPION KOP—A LONG PATROL—WELL REWARDED—A USEFUL CUP.

March 11.—As I have now undergone the novel experience of detachment duty, I feel I must devote a small chapter to more of my doings while on patrol sixteen miles west of Ladysmith. Among the orders issued last Thursday by Sir Redvers Buller was that Lord Dundonald, commanding our brigade of irregular cavalry, was to be Major-General (local rank). The promotion had to be celebrated, and the T. M. I. were the first to honour the new General

by inviting him to dinner, when Colonel Thorneycroft in his usual dashing manner, proposed our guest's health, and we sang "For he's a jolly good fellow." Next morning I was company orderly officer,—a duty which only entailed an early rise to see the horses counted, the forage drawn, and the horses taken out to water. Having seen this done at 6 A.M., I was wondering what to do next, when I received orders at 11 A.M. to take a detachment of thirty men from my company to join Farquhar, who had preceded me the previous day with sixty men to Acton Homes, about twenty two miles west of Ladysmith, the scene of Lord Dundonald's successful action some weeks ago. I was to take tents, two days' rations and forage, and to report myself to Farquhar, with instructions that he should fall back to this side of Venter's Spruit. I believe this was due to a rumour that the Boers were in some strength in his vicinity, and he was hardly strong enough to stand up to them if he was attacked in so distant and detached a position. I was more than delighted at the order, for I was already getting bored with the idleness of a

standing camp, and the persecution by the South African fly was almost unbearable. It was a case of flies in your nose, flies in your mouth, flies in your bed, and flies in your bath: the jam you ate was made of flies; the fresh fruit was destroyed by flies; we had roast fly, boiled fly, and drowned fly—in fact, it was fly everywhere from the fly! And still another reason for joy had I that I was going on detachment; for was it not my first opportunity of having even this humble command on active service, and didn't I hope for some slight adventure or some little incident which might furnish a report?

At 2 P.M. I marched out with twenty-nine men, one sergeant, and one corporal, and after consulting map and compass, I found myself with the D company detachment at 7 P.M. at Acton Homes. Farquhar was on the point of leaving his somewhat isolated post, owing to rumours that the Boers were in some strength in the vicinity, and he didn't care to risk a surprise with so small a force and be blamed for not acting on his information. So after unsaddling for a couple of hours and getting a bite of food in a farmhouse,

whose tenant, Mr Coventry, a good stamp of English colonist, had just turned up from Ladysmith, where he had been all through the siege, we marched back through the still moonlit night and bivouacked on the open veldt about 11 P.M., five miles nearer Ladysmith, where we now are. It was an uncommonly cold night; but without taking off anything we wrapped ourselves in our blankets and slept till the morning sun began to steam the dew from our damp clothes. A cup of tea, owing to the absence of firewood, was with difficulty procured with the assistance of an ant-heap as oven; but I had some biscuit among my rations, and we did ourselves as well as soldiers do when on active service. Our next move was to find a suitable position for our camp, and by 7 A.M. we had decided on this one, and were hard at work measuring it out, pinning down the horse lines, and pitching the tents at correct and equal distance, "according to regulation." Some tinned bacon, very nasty, was served out about twelve, but I preferred biscuit and jam, and then I was allowed to take over the catering arrangements for our "seven officer

mess." This is no sinecure, but it amuses me, and last night we had only three bottles of beer left and very little of anything else. An urgent appeal to our mess-president in the standing camp has rectified this, and a Scotch cart has come in laden with food and drink. Meanwhile, yesterday afternoon I went out to forage, and after calling unsuccessfully at several kraals, I came to a deserted Dutch rebel's farm which had the appearance of having been visited by robbers—or looters, shall I call them? Now it is strictly contrary to military law to loot, but no soldier can resist an appeal, be it from a goose or a pig, to move to more civilised quarters where better rations are obtainable than in a deserted farmyard! So I promptly complied with their request, and after an amusing hunt successfully landed a fine young porker and a dozen geese, and carried them off on the waggon which I had brought with me, leaving a receipt for the goods in the farmhouse! On my way back I stopped at a rather more important-looking kraal than I had yet seen, and was met by a Christian Kaffir (a Christian Kaffir, I am told, always

A Boer Gun Emplacement on the Colenso Road.

A Boer Sangar on the Colenso Road.

AT BREAKFAST ON THE VELDT.

wears clothes!), who allowed me to inspect the interior of his home—much to the amusement of his almost naked wife, and several little black picaninnies who preferred the garb of nature, and who bade fair to rival Cetewayo's stoutness even at this early age! The Kaffir promised to bring us in milk and eggs whenever he had any, and then I rode home.

The native kraal has been often described, but is well worth a visit. The one I entered on hands and knees was typical of cleanliness, with its hard, polished cow-dung floor like asphalt, its neat grass mats, and the hollowed fixed dish in which the natives crush their mealies. The number of tinned goods round the walls bore evidence that the owner was by no means impecunious; but I was particularly struck with the exterior, which, as you know, is made entirely by the women's hands of the long grass so abundant throughout the country.

The patrol Farquhar sent out came in without any information of importance, except that Villiers, the officer in command, had called at a Dutchman's farm, whose loyalty he was by no means certain of, but with whose daughter he

has apparently fallen in love! Instead of making Sunday a day of rest, we received orders to proceed to the magistracy, about fifteen miles away, see the magistrate, and note if all was quiet in the neighbourhood, and our western flank and communications under the Drakensberg not threatened by any Boer commandos. I was told off for this duty, with sixteen men from my company, and Farquhar himself came with me. This was all arranged last night at dinner, which we had in Farquhar's tent, as it was the first night we had felt the cold. It was blowing a gale, and we had no mess tent. Our dinner consisted of tinned soup (excellent), pork cutlets from the pig, which died a few minutes after its arrival (!), and stewed chickens which had been bought for 9d. each the previous day. The whole we washed down with beer or tea, and by 8.30 P.M. we were all in bed. It was a horrid cold damp night, and my servant had selected the lumpiest bed he could find in the limited area of ground my tent covered. The result was that I rolled off one mound on to my tent-pegs, and having extricated myself from that position I rolled

myself off into my pail of water, which was waiting for me to wash in next morning! I can't say I enjoyed my night, but I didn't take off my clothes, as I had to be up at 4.30 A.M. to start at daybreak on this patrol. It was about the vilest morning I remember—a thick damp mist, a cold raw wind, and a drizzling rain; but by 5 A.M. I had swallowed a cup of coffee and eaten a boiled egg and some dry bread, and was in my saddle.

We had an uneventful ride out, but the morning improved considerably, so that by the time we reached the magistracy at Upper Tugela I was quite dry again. A nice deserted place we found! The court-house, jail, post-office, and other cottages had their windows and doors broken in, and interior looted. The store, or hotel as it is called, was unoccupied except by an Indian coolie, who told us his master had gone away, and the only residents we could find were Dr Jones and his wife, who gave us the heartiest invitation to breakfast. He was expecting the magistrate, Mr Giles, back that morning, so we hoped to get all the information we required

over the best pot of tea, the richest butter, the newest baked bread, the freshest eggs, and the most excellent jam I have ever discussed. Dr Jones and his wife, who, by the way, come from the north of Ireland (I think their home is called King's Castle, Dunglass), live in a charming little red brick house, with a verandah running round three sides of it. At the back are capital stables and a surgery, and fenced in adjoining the house are several acres of good flower and vegetable garden. Dr Jones has only been there a year, but already the peach-trees are nine feet high, and the pumpkins, tomatos, and cucumbers growing in profusion. The doctor's wife gave us some violets and mignonette as a memento of our visit. Her husband had gone through quite an exciting time, a Boer commando under Erasmus having visited their house towards the end of October and vainly endeavoured to make him sign a paper to say that he was a Dutch subject, and that the land and house belonged to the Free State! Having flatly refused to turn traitor, although assuring them of his neutrality as a doctor, he was marched off to Harri-

smith and thrown into prison. At one time it was seriously debated whether he should be shot, but better counsel prevailed, and his poor wife was left to mourn his absence for a whole month, when he was liberated on parole and returned home. When we arrived the doctor was extracting a tooth from an old Zulu woman; and with some pride he showed me the two boxes he had found in which the dynamite had been stored that was used by the Boers for blowing up the local bridge over the Tugela. He had also the whole of the electric coil with which it had been fired, and he purposed making flower-boxes out of the cases and trailing a creeper over the wires! Many interesting stories Mrs Jones told us of the Boers and their visits, but they never entered her house nor commandeered what belonged to her.

The magistrate did not turn up, but as we were riding home we met him. He had taken us for Boers, and in his hurry to escape had got into a hole in the river which he was crossing and was wet through. He seemed very nervous, feared Boer raids, and hoped we

would move nearer to them in order to restore confidence among the loyal farmers and natives.

We got back from our thirty miles' ride about 3 P.M., and I have just had my first bath since Thursday, though I am still unshaved, as my razors won't cut and there is no barber in camp!

March 12.—I am giving the men and horses of my detachment a rest to-day, as we have done nearly seventy miles during the preceding two days and nights; and having discovered a man with a razor—not a barber—I have commandeered him, and have just undergone the torture of a shave. The man, who is in charge of the ambulance, is full of apology! Nothing of importance has occurred, but we got a Natal paper of March 10—really wonderful, though what has happened between March 3 and 10 we are left to surmise. Anyway, we have heard of Lord Roberts's second victory at Osfontein, and it almost looks as if the back of the rebellion were broken. I made quite a good haul last night—a stray horse having wandered into our lines, which I have

promptly appropriated. The Kaffirs are bringing us in milk and eggs and chickens every morning, so we can't grumble at our position; but though patrols are being sent out daily, the absence of the Boers from this neighbourhood, and the inactivity of Buller's force in Ladysmith, makes the ordinary camp life uncommonly dull. Our usual hours are—*réveillé* at 6; breakfast, 7.30; kit or arms' inspection during the morning; watering and grazing the horses at 9 A.M.; lunch at 1 P.M.; an excursion or an idle afternoon; stables and nosebags at 4.30 P.M., when the horses, having again been watered, are brought back to the lines; change of guard, 6.30 P.M.; dinner at 7 P.M., and to bed at 9 P.M. Of course, all this varies according to circumstances, and if it is your turn for patrol duty you start at sunrise, 5 A.M., and probably return at dusk; while if you are orderly officer, you have to visit the guards' vedettes and outposts two or three times by day and night.

Our forage and rations come in daily from the standing camp in Ladysmith, and so long as these are regular and we are not shifting our

camp, everything is most comfortable—though the flies have a disgusting knack of finding you out when you have been in camp twelve hours. If you can find Acton Homes on your map, you may be able to realise the neighbourhood of which I am writing. Our camp is within sight, and almost under the shadow, of the north-west end of Spion Kop, or Schwartz Kop as the Dutch call it. I have now had a good look at two sides of the country round Ladysmith—the southern from Chieveley, Colenso, and Pieters, and the western from Acton Homes and Upper Tugela. Both the approaches have the river as a natural defence, and on either side the innumerable kopjes and hills would give one an immediate impression that they were impregnable—in fact, that any one holding these spruits and passes could do so for ever and aye from an attacking force. That we have got through the enemy's defence at last speaks volumes for British pluck, but that our success was assisted by the withdrawal (not from defeat but by design) of the Boer forces is a fact which cannot be gainsaid.

This brings me back to Spion Kop, where

one of our greatest reverses took place. Had this hill been properly held—I mean, had those who took it so gallantly been adequately supported by artillery and other forces—the key could easily have been inserted into the door of Ladysmith. Lord Dundonald's strategic flank attack from Acton Homes was deserving of more notice than it received; and if the Harrismith road to Ladysmith had been utilised as our line of attack when we took Spion Kop, not only would Ladysmith have been relieved very soon after January 24 instead of February 28, not only should we have been spared the loss of 110 officers and 1400 men during the last fifteen days' fighting before the relief, but we should have cut off the routed Boers by the very roads they have escaped us—the one we are now guarding to Harrismith *viâ* Oliver's Hoek, and that which leads to Van Reenen's Pass. Instead of this, the Boers left us day by day between February 15 and 28, fighting a splendid rear-guard action, till on February 28 we marched into Ladysmith, only to find that the Boers had removed all their stores, waggons, and

guns in an orderly retreat. Now we are sitting still, while they are being given time to re-entrench themselves. I don't profess to be a general, but why not follow up a retreat, and strike and strike again in the hour of victory? I can see what it all means. Lord Roberts is going to relieve Natal, not General Buller. Perhaps it is as well.

March 14.—Forty-five miles' patrol yesterday! A baking sun and a horse dead! Such is my report; but it was not a fruitless ride, for after calling on Mr Richardson,—an old Haddington man, who tells many a good story of the present Lord Wemyss when he was Lord Elcho,—I paid a visit to several deserted Dutch farms, and discovered hidden away 150 sacks of mealies, 3 bags of wheat, and 20 sacks of potatoes, of a value of quite £200, which should now become Government property. At any rate, I put a native policeman on as guard, and our rebel Dutch will at least have to pay this fine for their conduct. Down the banks of the Tugela I rode, after thoroughly searching Oliver's Hoek and Koodoo passes; and after resting the horses

for an hour at the magistracy at Upper Tugela I got home at 7 P.M., having been over thirteen hours in the saddle. I am afraid the horses were a bit knocked up: one died close home of horse-sickness, a disease which often kills a horse (as in this case) instantaneously, and four others had to be *led* into the lines. I expect, after this, our camp will have to be moved farther west, as we are really too far away to thoroughly guard the district I was in; but I gleaned a good deal of information from Mr Richardson (who has been at Woodstock farm with his daughters over thirty years), from Kaffirs, and by means of my glasses. I don't think the Boers will venture far from their strongholds in the Drakensberg; but there is no doubt they are there, that they have four guns in the Tintwa Pass, and strong laagers in the Free State just at the top of the Koodoo and Oliver Hoek passes. Most of the farmers who have not run away are quite loyal, but there is one "gentleman" we have got our eye on and mistrust.

To-day is an idle day, and we have now

got the telephone connected to the main camp, so we shall be able to save messengers at any rate. I have had to send one man of my company in under arrest for threatening to strike and using insubordinate language to his non-commissioned officer; but there are always cases of this kind in every regiment, and take this corps throughout, from the short time I have been with them, I have found them a really hardy, rough, daring, and fine lot of men, just suited for the work they have to do, and a credit to our Colonial-raised forces. The greatest difficulties I have to contend with are the horses' sore backs. This is a perpetual worry, which has to be dealt with promptly or we should soon be infantry instead of mounted infantry. The heat is intense.

It may amuse you to know we have commandeered a large deal table and six chairs from a rebel farm close by for our mess; but of course these will be returned when we leave this camp. You would laugh if you saw me fill my cup with my morning cocoa, then use it for shaving-water, then wash my teeth out

of it, and then use it again for lunch; but that's how we do things in the T. M. I.! I have just got a note from the main camp, saying we are going to have sports and races on Saturday, and a "sing-song" in the evening, and asking me to recite; so I suppose I shall have to run 100 yards and trot out the "Absent-minded Beggar" and the "Women of Britain" for the doubtful benefit of the brigade.

CHAPTER XI.

I BID FAREWELL TO THORNEYCROFT'S.

A BIRTHDAY PRESENT—A HAPPY THREE WEEKS—ABOUT THE COLONIAL VOLUNTEERS—A GYMKANA—A "SING-SONG"—'THE WHITE GATES—OVER THE NEW BRIDGE AT COLENSO—I PART WITH MURRAY GOURLAY—STARTING FOR BASUTOLAND.

March 22.—I am at Umzimkulu, Griqualand East, but, in order to maintain a sequence of narrative, must retrace my steps. It was a cheery birthday present to find Lord Roberts's telegram at breakfast-time on the 16th. In it I found permission to proceed to join his forces at Bloemfontein; and as I was going into the main camp from Acton Homes in the ordinary course of events for the gymkana and "sing-song" of the T. M. I., I decided to take my tent and kit in with me, and start

at once after I had seen Colonel Thorneycroft. The ride into Ladysmith seemed as nothing, and the Colonel kindly allowed me to resign my commission if I had been gazetted, as he had understood from the first that I was out "on contract for newspapers," and had my work to do thoroughly and conscientiously. "Glad to have had you with us" were the words with which he said good-bye; and I could assure him of the happy three weeks I had spent soldiering with the T. M. I. Such a clinking lot of officers they were, from all parts of our colonies—Australians as well as Englishmen. Hard as nails, keen at their work, fearless yet cautious, they are just the men we want to lead 600 Colonials against an enemy they hate as much as a bullock does its driver. Bear in mind they were all volunteers, and were led by volunteer officers. More than that, they were Uitlanders fighting for their freedom. Among the ranks of these irregular corps you would find a well-known rider in Morny Cannon's brother-in-law, a member of the Bachelors' Club doing "servant" to one of the officers, and a crack whip who

had driven the "Comet" to "'appy 'Ampton." You would find men of business, men of money, and men of honour; and you would of course find, as you do everywhere, the pot-hunter, fortune-seeker, and the black sheep. There were precious few of the last, though, and what there were soon got their *congé*, to have their places at once refilled by dozens who were pining at Maritzburg to be up at the front. You could find men who would drink if they got the chance—who wouldn't in this hot country?—and you might find the best lot of swearers, thoroughly competent to compile a dictionary of oaths at a minute's notice! To swear like a trooper has indeed a meaning; but, take them all over, I don't want to be with a more genuine lot of fighting devils than the T. M. I., nor to be included in any better "mess" than that which was presided over by Colonel Thorneycroft. His capabilities as a soldier were not one whit less than his geniality as a colonel of one of the best regiments South Africa has turned out in this war.

The gymkana was held the last day I was with the regiment, on the 17th, and great fun

WRECKED BRIDGE AT COLENSO.

it proved. Captain Mann, who, since I wrote this, has joined the majority, poor fellow, had the course and implements all ready for the struggle, and to a man the regiment mustered to see who would prove best in the fray, to cheer on those who were competing from their own companies, and to forget the business of camp life by an afternoon of relaxation and enjoyment. There were 100 yards and long-distance races and a three-legged race; there was the high jump and the potato race; there was wrestling on horseback, and a pillow fight on a cross-bar which evoked tremendous laughter; there was an officers' scurry, in which the competitors had to saddle and bridle their own horse, jump three fences, eat a biscuit, light a cigar, drink a whisky-and-soda, and gallop back again; and there was a V.C. race, which brought out no end of starters. These gallant troopers cared nought for the state of the ground nor of the shins of the Government horses; they only wanted to be first in the fray and to bring back the "dummy" from his dangerous position. They charged the stone wall as if it had been made of paper, and I am glad I wasn't the

wounded man they brought home with a bullet in his stomach, or I think I too should have lost all my stuffing. Lord Dundonald, commanding the brigade, and several other officers, came to look on; and the Colonel gave away the prizes after three rousing cheers had been called for by a corporal.

In the evening we had the "sing-song." It was a weird and stirring sight. On a platform improvised from a huge ant-heap, under the dim light of an early moon, with a few lanterns flickering in the singer's face, an Irishman (it was St Patrick's day) was telling of his "counthrymen's" deeds. Anon a capital singer would give us the latest from the music-halls; and during the evening the "Absent-minded Beggar" and "Women of Britain" were listened to with wrapt interest by men who had never heard either in their lives. There was a shout of "Pass the hat" as I finished Kipling's poem, but I explained that others were doing it for us, and the Colonel agreed and said "No."

Far behind us over the roof of the "tin camp" in Ladysmith the same grey moon was

shedding her soft light over the graves of our departed heroes; and poor Ava and George Steevens must have looked on wonderingly from their home above the clouds. How strange and terrible a thing is war! How easily we feel, and as soon forget!

I left Ladysmith at 7 A.M. on Sunday, and with others travelled down to Maritzburg through the heart of the great battlefield, past the famous dam of sandbags over the Klip river, through the still hospital at Intombi where the poor sufferers lay longing to be with their friends again, on to Pietzer Station, where dead carcases and broken down waggons were still to be seen under the shadow of Bulwana where "Long Tom" plied his deadly trade for [illegible] reached the [illegible] mile short of [illegible] what more [illegible] given them [illegible] should [illegible] Gates of [illegible] looked out [illegible] from [illegible]

officers and men whose splendid deeds have drowned the terrors of war in the everlasting record of their glorious bravery. Among them was my poor cousin Claude Sitwell, Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel of the Dublin Fusiliers, honourably mentioned in despatches. But he, alas! was only one of many.

The following morning the new trestle bridge over the Tugela was open to railway traffic—three weeks after it had been commenced, and within the time guaranteed by Mr Hunter, the manager of the Natal Government Railway. From Colenso to Maritzburg is a tedious journey, but being daylight I saw Chieveley, Frere, and Estcourt, and got a very good snapshot, while we were moving, of the wrecked armoured train from which Winston Churchill was taken prisoner. I decided to ride through Basutoland *viâ* this place, Matatiele, and Maseru, thence *viâ* Ladybrand to Bloemfontein. I might have gone by sea to East London, and then on by rail, but two reasons have prompted me to take the longer route—my desire to see the country and have a little adventure; and my dread, after my

Maritzburg experience, of being detained at East London by the lines of communication. It is a long but interesting ride, and has only been done three or four times; and there is just that element of risk of being "nabbed" by the Boers that tempts me as an adventurous correspondent to go.

Murray Gourlay wouldn't come with me, so, after two days in Maritzburg buying stores and re-sorting my luggage, I bade farewell to the Governor and many other friends, and started yesterday at 6 A.M. by train to Richmond, which I reached breakfastless in a drizzling rain at about 9.30 A.M. There the post-cart to Umzimkulu was waiting, but was so loaded up with English mails that had I not booked seats for myself and servant I should not have got thus far. Still, here I am, with a kit-bag and my servant, waiting for my luggage, which a black man has promised to bring here by eight o'clock to-morrow morning on an ox-waggon which was coming this way. Whether he will do this remains to be seen.

CHAPTER XII.

A RIDE THROUGH BASUTOLAND.

UMZIMKULU — ITS MAGISTRATE — A TENNIS-PARTY — IN THE COURT-HOUSE — MR STRACHAN — A LONG DRIVE THROUGH GRIQUALAND EAST — I REACH MATATIELE — MR HOGG — PACK-PONIES—MY GUIDES—OVER THE DRAKENSBERG—AT NQUATSA'S NEK — THE ORANGE RIVER — A HILL-BOUND PRISON — A DELICIOUS BATH — THE SENKUNYANE — THE LE BIHAN FALLS—A NATIVE'S ADMIRATION FOR A PHOTOGRAPH—OVER THE MALUTI, 9000 FEET HIGH—A NARROW SHAVE—PROVISIONS RUNNING SHORT—TEMBUS—SESAYE, SON OF SESAKE—THE BLUE MOUNTAINS—A ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE WITH A NATIVE—SORE BACKS AND GIRTH-GALLS —A NATIVE BEER-FEAST—MACHAÛLO, SON OF LERONTHODI —BASUTO LOYALTY—DESCENT OF KORRO KORRO—A SIX DAYS' RIDE—I REACH MASERU.

THE loss of detail for this chapter is either due to neglect on the part of the 'Daily Mail,' who promised to keep all records of my life in South Africa; or it may possibly arise from the sinking of the Union liner

HOW I TRAVELLED—CAPE CART AND MULES.

WHERE I SLEPT—MY TENT.

Mexican off Cape Town early in April. I hardly think the latter cause likely, as the 'Sphere,' for which I was acting, received all the photographs I sent by the same mail. I would therefore beg my readers to realise the difficulty in which I am placed when memory alone must serve me in one of the most interesting episodes of my six months' adventure.

My luggage, for which I had been waiting, turned up all right on March 22, and having no option but to hire Mr Strachan's Cape-cart and six mules, as no other vehicle could accommodate me for several days, I decided to start for Matatiele the following morning. If you look at the map you may perhaps realise the position of Umzimkulu. Griqualand East, in which it is situated, is part of the Cape Colony, but so distant is it from any railway communication that it looks as if it should form part of Natal, through which it receives practically all its stores and transacts the greater part of its business. But whereas Natal would very much approve of a rectification of her frontier in this direc-

tion, it is not likely that Cape Colony will part without a struggle with quite one of her richest agricultural provinces. The land will grow anything, the Griquas furnish cheap and good labour, and the oxen fatten and horses grow faster than in any other part of the colony.

During my enforced stay at Umzimkulu I met the magistrate, Captain Whindus, who offered me every hospitality, including an invitation to dinner and a tennis-party. The idea of a tennis-party was so intensely funny to me, whose sole thought was of the war, that I decided to go, if only to satisfy myself once more of the extraordinary callousness of those who were taking no part in it. It was quite amusing, and my host and hostess most kind to me. Moreover, the next morning I was afforded an opportunity of listening to a charge of goat-stealing and wife-beating brought against some Kaffirs, and for which in the former case a very heavy sentence of imprisonment and fine were imposed, as against a severe lecture in the other. The curious part of the latter case, if I remember

it right, was that among Kaffirs, or at any rate among the Griquas, on the death of a legitimate husband, the husband's brother or next-of-kin is entitled to claim his brother's wife; and this had been the result in this case! I am rather astonished that such consanguinity has not affected the fine stature and physique of the Griquas. The way the goat-stealer had been tracked down by the native police was most amusing, the whole story being interpreted in the court-house by a half-caste American, who had lived there for years in this capacity.

Umzimkulu boasted of a curiously shaped but not uncomfortable hotel, though its proximity to a bar gave me my first sight of a drunken man since I landed in South Africa, and this notwithstanding the fact that the liquor store was almost cleared out. The river Umzimkulu cuts the village in half, and the post-office, which is on the Natal side, is reached by the Union Bridge, which boasts the first toll-house and inland customs I have yet come across. I tried hard to get the price of my Cape-cart reduced, but Mr Strachan is a good man of

business, and I had to pay my £20 or remain a fixture; so I started early on Friday morning, March 23, and instead of going as the coach does (*viâ* Kokstad), I made a short cut through Sneezwood and New Amalfi, and did the sixty or seventy miles with two teams of mules in about twenty hours, stopping the night at the farm of Mr Strachan's son.

The usual South African track, at first a very steep one, passed through a somewhat wooded piece of country, and then emerged into a great wide expanse of prairie land, dotted here and there with hills and kopjes, but on all sides rich in growing crops and pasture, on which thousands of head of cattle, sheep, and horses were contentedly grazing, in striking contrast to those thin, hard-worked beasts of General Buller's army. Here and there on my drive I passed stores, those of Mountain Home, Sneezwood, and New Amalfi being fresh in my memory. Nor must I omit a word of kindly thanks to the younger Mr Strachan, whose farm I reached late at night, after struggling wildly over the veldt through spruits and dongas and over boulders which

PREPARING FOR RIDE THROUGH BASUTOLAND.

CROSSING THE DRAKENSBERG.

at one time bade fair to break down the extraordinary springs of the Cape-cart. I arrived there just as he, with a guest or two, was finishing his evening meal; but he kindly gave me his bed and a bite of supper, which I washed down with a drop of whisky, kept only for his guests, as he is a teetotaller.

A pouring wet night made the roads in splendid condition for a good slide, and we skidded down to New Amalfi, where I met a native witch-doctor, whose fame has spread far and wide in this country as a curer of dysentery. It was at this store that I found, among a miscellaneous collection of coloured blankets, straps, beads, and saddles, a quantity of polo clubs, and learnt that the game was much played among the neighbouring farmers. The value of the land can possibly be understood when I tell you that what was originally a Government concession at 7s. 6d. per acre is now fetching fully 30s., and paying hand over fist at that price! Somebody, who had made his pile, was selling his farm and going home, and I wished I had had the capital to invest in it.

I reached Matatiele about three on Saturday afternoon, where Mr Hogg, the magistrate, had been advised of my arrival, and had succeeded in hiring me a cavalcade of ponies and two guides in readiness for my ride through Basutoland. I have come to the conclusion that it is only abroad that hospitality can be spelt with a big H, and I look back with the pleasantest memories to Mr Hogg's extreme courtesy during my short stay. There was nothing he and Mrs Hogg and their daughter did not do to make me comfortable, and only my anxiety to reach Lord Roberts prevented my remaining a longer time under their hospitable roof. Fresh meat, hard-boiled eggs, delicious white bread, tea, coffee, and butter were all added to my store of tinned foods; and Mr Hogg himself personally superintended the fitting on of the packs, and drove me the first ten miles of my journey in the direction of the Drakensberg hills, which divide Basutoland, as they do Natal, from Cape Colony.

Matatiele itself is a neat, compact little village, boasting a church, court-house, hotel, and nursery-garden of no mean proportions, be-

sides a quantity of smart-looking villas, each with a little plot of ground smiling under its weight of fruit and flowers. There is a doctor resident there, and mails are brought by coach three times a week from Kokstad. I hope some day I may have the opportunity of revisiting this little place, which I looked back on from the top of the Drakensberg, fully twenty miles away, with regretful thoughts at my departure.

Something now about my cavalcade. My servant was with me, and Mr Hogg had given me two of his best native police, one of whom knew the short cut and the other how to cook. That meant four ponies, and four more were in readiness to carry my packs. I had to be initiated into the method of pack-carrying, and was much astonished when Mr Hogg told me that in a country such as Basutoland, for a long consecutive ride, no pony should carry more than 50 lb. of dead-weight. I had relied on packing 100 lb. at least on a pony, and it was therefore with some difficulty that we allotted to each an even share of my rather large baggage train. I had with me my tent, which,

with pegs, &c., weighed over 100 lb.! Then there were two Wolseley valises, averaging 50 lb., besides two large bags of clothes, &c., and a portable canteen with my tinned stores in addition. However, all was saddled by 8 A.M. on the 25th, and having decided on the shorter, though practically unknown, route to Maseru through the heart of the country, we started on a lovely Sunday morning for Nquatsha's Nek, in the Drakensberg, where I intended to off-saddle and spend an hour or two with the easternmost resident magistrate of Basutoland. There was another well-known road round the south, which, however, would have taken five days instead of three, and which passed through Quitting, Mohalles Hoek, and Mafeteng. Had I realised how long my "short cut" was going to occupy, I might possibly have selected this mail route instead.

The names of my two guides were Joseph, a very small, cunning-looking man, full of talk and business, and delighted at the importance of taking his "baas" through Basutoland; and Solomon, in direct contrast to the little jockey, a tall, solemn individual. Both spoke English,

though in this respect Joseph was *facile princeps*. It is worth noting here that the natives, especially the Christians, delight in Scriptural names, and when I reached Nquatsa's camp I was provided with a third guide, a huge Basuto policeman in corduroy kit, whose name was Lazarus! We arrived at the Basuto residency about one o'clock, where Mr Blyth did all he could to make me comfortable while I rested the ponies. He is a bachelor, and a more lonely spot for a young man I have never come across. I hope by the time this is in print his desire for promotion to some more social spot will have been attained. Certainly his little house, perched on the top of the Drakensberg, is not without interest, so far as landscape and scenery are concerned, for the varied ruggedness of this great mountain range was truly wonderful; but the only white man he has to speak to within twenty miles is the storekeeper at his camp. After lunch he rode with me some of the way to the Senku or Orange river, which we reached late at night, and, crossing the ford, made our first encampment, after a ride of about thirty-five miles. The tent was

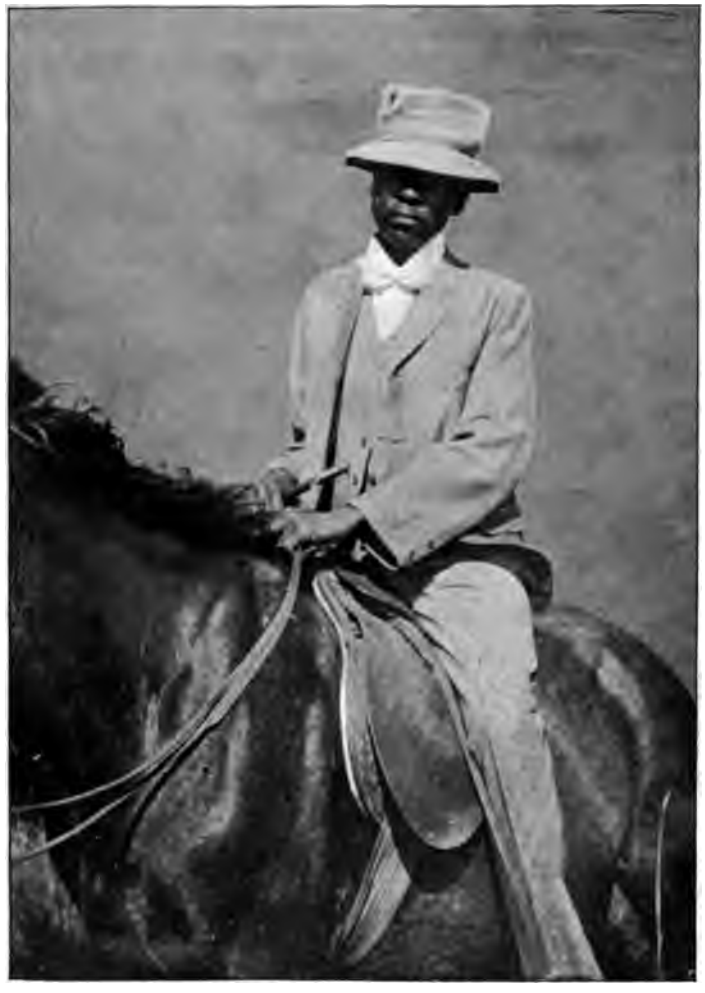
pitched in the darkness, and after making some soup and grilling a piece of meat at a roaring fire, I turned in and slept.

I had decided, on Mr Hogg's advice, to start early each morning and ride from 5 A.M. till the sun was at its height; and, having off-saddled and rested my horses a few hours, to resume my journey about three each afternoon, and pitch my camp at sundown. By this means both he and my guides thought I should reach my destination, if not on Tuesday night, at any rate by Wednesday, the 28th of March. So, though the arranging of the packs took longer than I had anticipated, and my guides were none too anxious to get up early, we started about six o'clock on our second day's journey, hoping to reach the Senkunyane or Little Orange river that night. But I soon discovered that

"The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft a-gley,"

and that daylight was fast disappearing and the ponies already showing signs of wear and tear without any river being in sight. So I halted for the night, having fortunately taken the pre-

MY GUIDES.



MACHAULO, LERONTHODI'S SECOND SON.

caution to fill all water-bottles, and water the ponies at a small stream we had crossed an hour previously. I asked Lazarus how far on the river was, but, pointing with his hand, all he could say was, "Just on, just on." It was as well I did not go any farther, as it was twelve o'clock on the third day before we reached the place where we had hoped to camp the previous night. The distance we had traversed, I felt sure, was far less than the fifty miles I had anticipated doing—in fact, I doubt if we did much more than twenty-eight; but with scarcely a kraal to mark our course, and with the names of hills so unspeakable and unmarked on any map, I had no idea as to where we were. All I did realise was, that at the pace we were going we should certainly not reach Maseru in four days, unless the country we crossed became less mountainous than that we had traversed during the preceding forty-eight hours.

When I crossed the Drakensberg I was 7000 feet above sea-level, and I climbed and descended three ranges quite as steep, and in one case higher. The country through which I

passed was interesting enough from the sight I got of its natives, its kraals, its ponies, and its extraordinary fertility; and if the regularity of its perpetual mountain ranges could have been broken by any wooded patch or district, I should have thought it heavenly. But the fierce sun beat on my little cavalcade with such pertinacity from six in the morning till six at night that I was not sorry to mark its setting in the direction I was going, leaving behind it the most brilliantly coloured illumination in which to eat my dinner and put myself to bed. After off-saddling on the third day for our morning meal, I had the most delicious bathe in the Little Orange river,—a deep, clear, sandy pool giving me the opportunity of diving (unfortunately unsuccessfully) for a cake of carbolic soap with which I had been performing my ablutions!

That afternoon we rode on, expecting to camp near the Le Bihan falls—one of the almost unseen sights of Basutoland, the huge waterfall losing itself in the bowels of the earth, and emerging Heaven knows where! But this was not to be, and fearing we should not find water,

I was compelled to stop near a small spring for my third night, and rather earlier than usual. The sight of a white man in this neighbourhood was evidently a rarity, for the hills resounded with shouts from the neighbouring kraals, and soon we had a little crowd of semi-nude men, women, and children watching us at a respectful distance as we pitched our tent and collected material for a fire, which was none too easily procured at this spot. Gradually their astonishment wore off, and those who remained were persuaded to come and look at the interior of my tent, round which they had been stalking with eyes of curious amazement. I showed a woman, who seemed to be the mother of a huge family of picaninnies, a photograph of a lady I had, and offered to take her with my kodak. She was too terrified to trust to the latter operation, but begged hard through my guides for the photograph, which was that of a lovely woman. What struck her most was the hair (which it took long to convince her was *really* hair), and I remember my guide's interpretation of what she said: "Oh, how I wish I could have the photograph. I would sit and worship it all

day long!" I appeased her, however, with some pennies, and as I had sufficient I gave each of her children one, and explained that the head was that of the "great white Queen." The woman was incredulous, as she had been told that the Queen was a very old lady; but she grew to understand that this was a likeness of her Majesty during her younger days. I asked her what she would do with the coin, and in reply she held the penny at arm's-length and pointed upwards with her other hand, at the same time giving expression to a deep "Eh!" which is the Basuto sign of salutation.

We started again on Wednesday, and had quite an adventure, for after passing the Le Bihan falls we had to cross the Maluti or Double Mountains, a terrific range of hills 9000 feet high. It was fortunate that, to relieve our ponies, we had dismounted, for Lazarus missed the track and got on to the edge of a winding precipice, where we had either to go on or stand still. So close were the packs on the off side to the hill, that had they grazed or caught a projecting rock they would have been hurled to destruction thou-

TRENCH ON THE COLENSO ROAD.

KORROKORRO MOUNTAIN—THE TRACK WE DESCENDED.

sands of feet below! One pony did stop, and it was only by dint of much coaxing that it was prevailed on to proceed. The danger past, we had as stiff a descent on the other side, and from the top I could not but wonder at the greatness of this prison-bound country. It looked as if there were no egress, so completely were we surrounded by the maze of consecutive mountain ranges. My heart fell as I realised it must be days yet before we reached Maseru, though my guide kept saying "Just on, just on," and pointing at the sky to show by the sun at what hour we should arrive the following day! The worst of it was, Mr Hogg had told me the guides were provisioned, and I had only brought sufficient for myself and servant for three days. The guides, however, were cunning enough to conceal their own food, and I had perforce to feed them too! My store was almost exhausted, and I was lucky to buy a chicken, a few eggs, and some mealies at Carl's kraal, at the foot of the Maluti, as it was the last kraal [illegible] for thirty-six hour[illegible] was in[illegible] to quite the most

Basuto people, who told my guides they had never seen a white man before.

We camped by another small river, whose name I forget, some fifteen miles beyond this kraal, having covered nearly thirty miles that day; but it was evident that my ponies could not hold out much longer, unless I relieved them for a day at least of their loads. Their backs and tails were sore from the rubbing of the packs and cruppers, and those we were riding were also suffering from girth-galls. Whilst I was preparing my camp, I saw two girls carrying enormous bundles of sticks on their heads, as they forded the stream and wended their way to the kraal I had just left. They were Tembus,—quite a different race to the Basutos (who are all marked with three cuts from the nose across the face), and much handsomer, if I can use the word, than any black women I had yet seen. One was most shy, as we observed that she was hiding behind her bundle of sticks. It was at this camp that Sesaye, son of Sesake, a Basuto chief, rode past. Though he could speak no English, he informed me through an

interpreter that he was very pleased to see a Britisher in the country. Every man I met either raised his hat or his hand, and with "Eh! Morène" (I greet you, chief) testified to the general loyalty of the country.

Just before we started on our fifth day's ride over the Blue Mountains a native passed us driving two horses. Having bargained for a loan of them, he offered to escort us to a river before sundown, whence Maseru would prove a short day's ride. Nothing loath, I accepted, and two of my worst-conditioned ponies had an easy day nibbling the grass, as they were driven on ahead of us. Unfortunately, the river to which we were going was much farther than our tired ponies could reach in one day, and when we camped we tried to persuade the native to let us keep the horses, as he had bargained to take us before sundown to the river. He, however, did not see it in the same light, and said he must move on, so I paid him the 6s. I had agreed on with him for the hire of the horses, and was busy preparing a fire to cook the little packet of soup I had left when I heard a heated altercation between Solomon

and the native, who had ridden off a hundred yards or so. Though I did not understand the language, I gathered that it was some good old-fashioned swearing in the Basuto tongue over the native's refusal to stay with his two horses. Solomon rushed after him with his sjambok, and as the native faced up to him I saw there was going to be a fight, which would prove quite a diversion. They closed, and after Solomon had struck him with the sjambok once or [illegible] had not got the better of him, I saw little Joseph, his face purple with rage, rush after him with my best cooking-pot as an instrument of warfare! Then I thought it time to interfere, and called my guides off the man. That was not the end of it, however. The man came back to me and accused my guides of having stolen 2s. from the money I had given him, which they strongly denied. I felt sure the man was lying, and that he had probably dropped it in the tussle, so I soon settled the point by saying that if I found the coin on the path where the fight took place I would keep it—otherwise he should have two more shillings. You should have seen the man run and

pick up the lost 2s. and gallop away, to the questionable delight of Solomon and Joseph, who hurled complimentary Basuto epithets after him.

Our dinner to-night consisted of some soup, a very small tinned tongue, and a few Albert biscuits. A bottle of whisky, which was half full, had practically been emptied during the day, and I cannot help thinking Solomon is not such a man of morals as I took him to be, he having had charge of it in his saddle-bag. The result was we had only about a dozen biscuits, two table-spoonfuls of cocoa, and a packet of compressed soup, wherewith to reach Maseru, and we did not expect to meet a kraal for some time,—nor did we till late on the evening of our fifth day's ride, when, after vainly searching empty kraals for their owners, we at last found one tenanted, and containing, besides a family of young porkers, a fair quantity of lean chickens, some of which we bought and made a hearty meal of. The emptiness of the kraals we had visited was due to a "beer-feast" which was in progress some distance away, and which is a not un-

common ceremony in any Kaffir country. Certain days are fixed as holidays, and all the neighbours congregate to enjoy the products of the latest brewing. The beer is made of Kaffir corn, something like millet, and when drunk in large quantities, as it is, becomes very intoxicating! The result is generally a free fight, though few are seriously damaged, owing to the thickness of the native skull!

The night of the fifth day's ride I celebrated by a bath in a small clear stream, when I am sure I sat on an eel, as something swift and slimy glided from under me, while a small crab, of which all the rivers and puddles are full, resented my squashing it with my hand. We got a little fresh milk, too, from some natives, and ascertained that really the next day we should reach Maseru. I determined, however, to start early in order to avoid another night out; and though the pony my servant was riding showed signs of giving out, we started at 6 A.M., and that afternoon reached Maseru—the journey having occupied me six days instead of three, and the average distance covered being about twenty-eight miles per day of

eight hours. On the ride into Maseru I met numbers of Basutos going east over the track I had come, and civility was everywhere apparent. Amongst those I passed was Machaūlo, Leronthodi's fourth son. He spoke fairly good English, and being the owner of several thousand head of cattle, was dressed *à la Européen*, with collar and cuffs and trousers. He was on his way to raise men from his district to help in repairing our broken railway near Aliwal North. He gave me much interesting news of the war, which he had brought from Maseru, but I gathered that nothing much had occurred since I left Ladysmith.

The last day's journey was much the same as the previous ones, though possibly the Korro Korro was the roughest if not the highest hill I had yet descended. The heavy boulders made the track imperceptible, and sure-footed and clever as the Basuto ponies are, I thought it best to walk, or rather scramble, down, and left my pony to do the same by himself. Sir Godfrey Lagden was at home, and insisted on my staying with him. He gave me to understand my feat was a remarkable one. One

thing I knew was, that it had been monotonous. On a journey like the one I performed through this hill-bound prison a friend is essential. Still, the experience was novel, and the country and its population full of interest to one who was out to see all he could of South Africa. I should not be surprised to hear of gold being discovered in quantities in Basutoland at no distant date, though the natives have a great aversion to your picking up a stone and examining it!

I paid off and said good-bye to my guides; and having dined, I went once more to bed between sheets, in a comfortable room in the Residency.

SIR GODFREY LAGDEN, WITH LADY LAGDEN AND FAMILY.

CHAPTER XIII.

MASERU.

MASERU POLITICALLY — MASERU STRATEGICALLY — THE PARAMOUNT CHIEF — THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER — A NATIVE DANCE — ADVICE AND RASHNESS.

March 31. — I wonder if any of you have realised the importance of Maseru, not only strategically but politically, during the past six months. I certainly never did till I arrived on Friday, and a closer examination of the part it has played and is playing, coupled with some interesting conversations I have had with members of its white population, lead me to look on Maseru as another Mafeking, without, of course, the bombardment. Here is a small town, the capital of a country inhabited and dominated by a semi savage race, under the protection and suzerainty of

her Majesty, situated on the flank of a hostile country, cut off from all supplies for six months, a most important medium of telegraphic communication, and withal inhabited by thirty white men who hold their lives in their hands, and whose chief has had not only to preserve the frontier from the incursion of the Free Staters but to guard against a rising of the Basuto people. Such an event would have caused interminable complications, and might have resulted in the loss to Great Britain of a country valuable in itself as a buffer-state. It might have led also to further risings of the blacks in other parts, and the overthrow once and for all of that word "prestige" which alone governs and holds in check a people who, once they have seen blood, wish to help in spilling it! There is little doubt that at the commencement of the war the Basutos were itching to join in it. There is still less doubt that the Free Staters did all in their power to cause an insurrection against the British by spreading false reports as to our defeats, by freely importing liquor into the country, and in

taking Basutos to Pretoria to have a look at our prisoners. The Free Staters were as perfectly aware as the British Resident Commissioner at Maseru was, that if they could succeed in getting one tribe to rise against another there would be general bloodshed. At the same time, however much they knew that the Basutos favoured Great Britain as against themselves, they were equally conscious that there were tribes who could be "bought," and, once a general rising was established, the complications for Great Britain would be no small ones.

All these difficulties have so far been overcome, and it must ever be a feather in Sir Godfrey Lagden's cap, and those of his deputies and assistants, that the Basutos have not only refrained from crossing the border, but have loyally assisted in patrolling the Caledon river and prevented the incursion of the Free Staters. I have had a good look round the little town. It boasts only thirty white adults capable of carrying arms and about seventy native police. Just before the war broke out two Maxims arrived, and un-

skilled, though to my mind most skilled, labour succeeded in erecting two small forts —one in the shape of a blockhouse and the other something of a round tower—on which the guns were mounted to cover the approaches from the Free State. A few sand-bag fortifications have also been thrown up, and each man has taken his turn for six months in commanding the town and receiving the daily reports of the various patrols and scouts who were constantly coming and going. By this means—and I feel sure that what I write will be confirmed by the Intelligence Department—news of the enemies' movements of the greatest importance has been transmitted to Lord Roberts and his generals. Nor must I omit to mention the loyalty of the paramount chief, Leronthodi, who from the commencement has sided with the British, though there are many tribes so hostile to himself that for that reason alone they might have given their assistance to the Free Staters, and made petty internal jealousies their *casus belli*. I imagine, from the innumerable telegrams, reports, and despatches which are passing, that there will be

A BASUTO WAR-DANCE AT MASERU.

sufficient material to fill several Blue Books, and no doubt her Majesty's Government will some day have cause to record their thanks to Sir Godfrey Lagden, who has now been sixteen years in Basutoland. He in turn will, I know, be proud to recommend his lieutenants for a share in his honour, whose work, according to himself, has been not only incessant, but brave and conscientious. Unarmed, and accompanied only by the usual orderly, they have gone about their duties of defence and pacification with that tact and *sangfroid* which is so characteristic of the British race; and the natives have not been slow to recognise their fearlessness and imperturbability in a time of danger. The name of the Queen is hailed everywhere, and the civil, respectful, and honest "Eh! Morena" (I greet you, chief) with which you are constantly met is sufficient testimony to the word "prestige" with which we govern these semi-savage countries of ours. The town has been full of Basuto waiting to go through to inspect the railway between Bloemfontein and Aliwal North. A native chief was arraigned for my

amusement, and was led by Api, Leronthodi's fourth son, a fat, jolly, little, jockey-looking man. The dance commenced by some semi-naked warrior rushing into the ring and boasting of his great deeds, at times received with derisive merriment by the onlookers. Having at length got to the end of his achievements, he would throw himself about the ring we formed and then breathless rejoin the remaining dancers, who followed suit. All the time Api would say or sing some lines, and a deep sonorous chant would end the verse. It was an amusing and impressive sight, and I got several snapshots of the dancers, as I did of the prisoners in the jail, some of whom were kept under lock and key for political reasons.

The Residency is a nice, comfortable little bungalow, and the Government offices are also worth looking at, but I cannot claim any desire to live there for sixteen years, although it can boast of a racecourse, polo-ground, tennis courts, golf-links, and cricket-ground!

My arrival here seems to be in the nick

of time. A large Boer commando is reported in the neighbourhood of Ladybrand on the Plat Berg, a long flat mountain running east and west, the former extremity just obscuring from Maseru a sight of Ladybrand, which is about eight miles distant. Looking rather to the south, I can see the two paps of Thaba Nchu, which up till yesterday, at any rate, were in the possession of our forces, heliographic communication having been established between it and this little place in Basutoland. It looks as if the Boers mean to dispute our farther western advance, and I hear that Wepener, now in General Brabant's hands, is none too strongly held, but is being reinforced. So much for war news and my chances of being in the thick of it. I have, by Sir Godfrey Lagden's advice, given up my idea of crossing by the Plat Berg to Thaba Nchu, some forty miles distant. He seems to think that, in an unknown country and on foot, I can never get through the enemies' lines, nor take with me enough provisions. He also feels I cannot really carry information of sufficient importance to Lord Roberts

to be of any value, as by wire and native runner every possible news is being hourly transmitted. Moreover, he dislikes sharing in any responsibility which might arise were I taken as a spy; nor does he care, after his many months of arduous labour in preserving the neutrality of Basutoland, to risk being involved by the recklessness of an individual. "You want to go as near the precipice as possible without falling over it," he said. "I quite understand your ardour," Sir Godfrey added, "but you should rest satisfied with your feat of having crossed Basutoland. I will help you as far as I can, but I cannot allow you to return here if you find you are unable to get through"! With this last remark any attempt to cross the border to-night has vanished from my mind, and I have decided to wait till Sunday and cross farther south with a Basuto who knows the country. It will be a perilous ride, but, after all, I am out in the interests of a newspaper which will not thank me for an ordinary humdrum account of my daily doings. So hav-

ing had a look over Maseru, I am going to start, on a bad day certainly—namely, the feast of April Fool!

Every one has been most kind to me, and none more so than my host and hostess.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NIGHT RIDE.

THE FAULT OF MY NATURE — A STRIPPED SADDLE — A FICKLE MOON — WE MISS THE DRIFT — DOGS AND GEESE — DANGER AHEAD — WE ARE PURSUED — THE NEWS OF SANNAH'S POST DISASTER — DISCONSOLATE — STARVATION OR A BULLET — MY GUIDE DESERTS ME.

April 1 *and* 2.—Perhaps these two days will live more vividly in my mind than any others, unless it be the two which followed; but this much I can say, that both mentally and physically I have undergone an experience which, thrilling, exciting, and eventful as it was, is one I have no desire to undergo again. I have something in my nature which is a doubtful acquisition—the desire to explore unknown and dangerous depths without weighing, or at least caring to reckon, the cost of consequences. I

veritably believe that if hell were not an abyss which dead men only tread, and from which there is no "return-ticket," I would go there and chance getting out of a place which my many friends have told me I have, metaphorically, already been to!

Notwithstanding the fact that I could have made a comparatively easy journey to Bloemfontein *vid* Mafeteng (in Basutoland) and Wepener, I determined to get past the Boer screen if possible, and make the short cut to Thaba Nchu, although I had the previous day been informed that heliographic communication with that place had suddenly ceased. I wrote a hurried letter, gave my servant instructions to go with my luggage by an ox-waggon which was taking some white gangers *vid* Wepener to Bloemfontein; and with my saddle-bags and holsters filled, and a rug under my saddle, I started from Maseru at 9 A.M. on Sunday, April 1, to ride through the enemy's lines. My guide, who had two days before got safely through, was a native of Thaba Nchu, and knew the country well, but he declined to go too near to where we had information of the Boer laagers!

So on a hot bright first of April I bade farewell to Maseru, and started down the Basuto side of the Caledon river. We rode quietly on, my guide hardly understanding a word of English. At about two o'clock we off-saddled for an hour at a friendly spruit, and there I ate half the good things Lady Lagden had given me, and drank a little lime-juice and water with which I had filled my water-bottle. I was carrying in one bag a shirt, pair of socks, sponge, nail, tooth, and hair brushes, a piece of soap, my writing-pad, a towel, and three handkerchiefs. In the other was my lunch and dinner, as I hoped to reach Thaba Nchu early in the morning. In one holster I had my Mauser pistol loaded, and twenty rounds of ammunition; in the other, a tin of tobacco and some kodak spools. My mackintosh was rolled up over the holsters; and I had on over my khaki kit a sam-brown belt, to which my Zeiss glasses and purse were attached, while my water-bottle and kodak were slung over my shoulders. We must have ridden fifteen miles when we started again at 3, and by 5 o'clock, when we reached one of the Basuto police patrols, we had done quite

twenty-four miles. The country over the border was reported clear of the Boer patrols, so I finished my food, and, at the request of my guide, decided to start at 6 P.M. when the sun went down. The native expected the journey to occupy eight or ten hours, but everything had to depend on circumstances and on the difficulties we encountered. My worst thought was, that perhaps Thaba Nchu had been evacuated, but we had heard no firing the previous day.

The new moon rose at six. It was but a streak in the darkening sky. I turned the few shillings in my pocket and wished for luck—then mounted my pony. The Basuto corporal said, "God preserve you, sir!" and we started for the drift on the Caledon river. Something went wrong at once. We missed the drift, and I found myself up to my thighs in water and my pony swimming. It was only for a moment, but it was a distinct discomfort to start the journey with clinging breeches and boots full of water. A figure loomed in front of us as we climbed the opposite bank. It was a black man. He brought us news of

heavy firing the previous day in the neighbourhood of Thaba Nchu, but he thought the road we were taking — a circuitous one *vid* Koro's Kop and Mabola—was quite clear. We spoke in muffled tones, and rode on at a fast "triple."

Striking slightly south of west, we could mark our course by the top of Koro's Kop, which rose giantlike above the horizon some fifteen miles distant. The silence of the night was broken only by the pitter-patter of our ponies' feet,—even the crickets and the frogs seemed to have lost their power of speech. A light some way to our right flickered, went out, and reappeared again, but still my guide rode on, deviating slightly from his course. The warm close air changed suddenly into a damp, penetrating, cold vapour, as we passed through some valley, and as quickly changed again as we emerged from it. A dog began barking furiously, and was answered by a distant cur, and the hills in my imagination seemed to echo with their horrible noise. But still on we rode at a pace that must have been quite six miles an hour. The tension, the

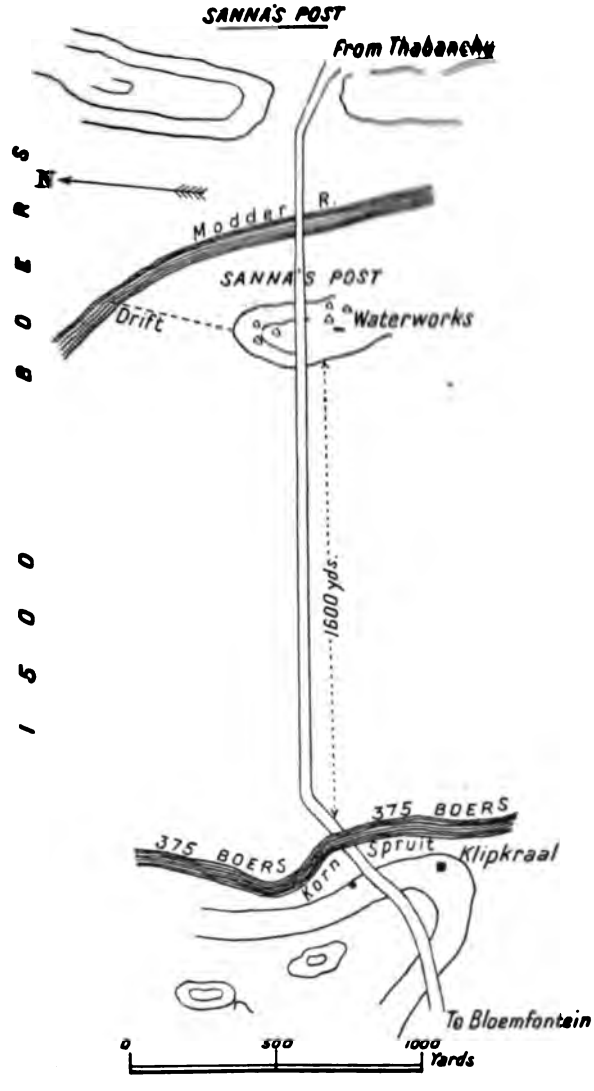
loneliness, and the silence began to prey upon my nerves. I imagined I saw figures jumping up and lights all round me, but in reality the dogs had stopped barking, and instead, the bull-frogs were shouting at our intrusion. Then a fresh sound broke upon my listening ears. It was that of a flock of geese aroused from their slumber, and they made night hideous with their cackle. We must have been near a farmhouse, for a light shone out at once, and first one and then another dog barked. My guide turned sharply to the south. The farms were all Dutch, and they harboured the night patrols. I thought of the Roman legend of the geese which saved the Capitol, and turned quickly after his shadow. A little farther and he stopped suddenly. So did I! He was off his pony in a twinkling. I followed suit. "What was it?" "Nothing," he said,—"we rest few minutes, give horse feed." I drew a sigh of relief. I thought at least we had tumbled into a Boer laager, so overstrung had my nerves become. I struck a match in my hat, lit my pipe, and looked at my watch. It was about half-past nine! A quarter of an

hour's rest, and off we went again, this time at a much slower pace. There was some doubt as to whether there was a Boer patrol or laager at Koro's Kop, round the southern base of which we were travelling. Suddenly another flock of geese began to cackle, a dog barked, and a light shone from the window of a farm-house close to our left. We quickened our pace, got off the hard track, and hurried past. Then, with that danger left a mile astern, we turned abruptly to the right as if for Mabola. It was about 11 o'clock when my guide stopped and said, "I leave you now, you hold horse; friends here tell me where Boer is." Reluctantly I assented, and found myself alone, holding the two ponies in the pitch-dark night, every nerve strained to see the objects in front of me, to catch the least sound of approaching danger. I had been alone a minute or two—it seemed an hour—when I heard a noise as of a door opening, and instantly my ears were greeted with a chorus of howling dogs. I distinguished voices speaking, I even heard some order given in Dutch. Still the dogs barked noisily. I must

have been alone ten minutes when a horse trotted past me some distance away and neighed. I jogged my ponies in the mouth in the fond hope of stopping their reply. In vain. First one and then the other answered the stranger. I heard muffled sounds and the clatter of horses' feet on the still night air, and I strained my ears to ascertain their direction and their meaning. Hurried steps came towards me! What were they? I held my breath and hesitated whether to make a bolt for it with the aid of my compass. "Hist!" It was my guide. What a relief! With him came two blanketed niggers. It was their kraal he had visited, their dogs which had nearly made me fly. My guide muttered in broken English and in a subdued voice, "This very lucky; big Boer patrol close by; these men want two bob show us another drift over Loeew river." Here was a lucky escape! Half a mile farther on was a drift we had intended crossing. It was there this patrol was posted! I told my guide I feared the patrol was alarmed by the sounds I had heard, but I had barely finished speaking

when we heard the tread of horses, and hastily agreeing to the terms, we started off as fast as possible after our new guides over the veldt. They found the drift, and I lost six shillings in paying them two! The danger was over, and we struck south again.

We jogged on uneventfully, distinguishing the early fires of a Boer laager in the distance, and hearing from another friendly native that a small British force had arrived in the neighbourhood yesterday, but considerably to the south of where we were. It was 3.30 in the morning when I suggested an hour's halt, to which my guide assented, as I thought that, on daylight appearing, we could reconnoitre our position, and gallop instead of walk the rest of the distance. Some of you have never faced an unseen but expected danger. I strongly advise you to avoid doing so if possible. I started full of bounce, and by the time I off-saddled at 3.30 A.M. I was physically and mentally worn out. The strain of seeing and listening in the dark, the want of knowledge of my own as well as of the Boer positions, the fact that I carried my life in my


SANNA'S POST
From Thabanchu
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SANNA'S POST
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Waterworks
1600 yds.
375 BOERS
375 BOERS
Spruit
Klipkraal
Kom
To Bloemfontein
0
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hands, and the physical exhaustion from riding nearly twenty hours in wet clothes and for the last four in bitterly cold weather, told severely on me; but wrapping myself up in my blanket, wet with the horse's sweat, I laid my head on the saddle and was soon fast asleep. It was nearly five when I woke, and raining pitilessly. The lightning, very vivid, alone lit up the skies, and the thunder growled ominously. We caught our horses, saddled up, and started again. As the cold grey morning broke, Thaba Nchu loomed in the distance about ten miles to the north-west. We made for it, but just as I was hoping my journey was at an end we heard of its evacuation by the British troops —the previous day, it was said. Disconsolate, I turned away, and getting into a donga, I pulled out my map and consulted my guide.

The natives had told him that the Boers were in force between Thaba Nchu and Bloemfontein, but that a British detachment had occupied Dewetsdorf, a village about eighteen miles south of where we were. Could I reach it? Without rest it was impossible. My pony was completely done up. It was twenty-four

hours since I had left Maseru, and we must have covered nearly sixty miles. There was a store about three miles off belonging to one Dickey—a Scotchman. I determined to try it, and with difficulty kicked my pony along to within half a mile. Then I sent my guide on to see if the coast were clear, and if I could get food. He returned saying they would not serve me, and would shoot me if I came near. The owner was in Bloemfontein. Here was a pretty position! I turned back and off-saddled under a small kopje, and my guide deserted me, saying it was too dangerous to go on.

CHAPTER XV.

I AM CAPTURED AND ESCAPE.

ON TO DEWETSDORF—A SECOND STEYN—MISGIVINGS—BOER TREATMENT—I AM TAKEN TO GENERAL DE WET'S COMMANDO—STRANGE COMPANIONS—A CURIOUS GUARD—THE BOER PLANS ARE REVEALED TO ME—IN A DUTCH FARMHOUSE—THE FLOOR PREFERABLE TO THE BED—I PLAY A GAME OF BLUFF—I ESCAPE—AT PETER KELLY'S FARM—AN IRISHMAN'S KINDNESS.

THE morning of April 2 improved, and ten o'clock found me drying myself in the sun, my pony knee-haltered grazing by my side, my saddle-bags emptied of all food, myself a stranger in an enemy's country! A few farmhouses were scattered about down the road I intended to take to Dewetsdorf, a black man was driving a herd of sheep in my direction, some oxen were ploughing a piece of land, and a Kaffir boy seemed

more intent on watching me than the horses he was there to tend. I kept myself awake for fear of being caught in my somewhat exposed position, and watched my pony that it should not graze too far from me. I wanted water, but there was no spruit at hand, and I decided to wait till I moved on before searching for it. Two Boers, armed with rifle and bandolier—one full-bearded and old, the other so young that a razor had probably never crossed his chin—rode past me. I don't think they saw me, though they might easily have done so, and I wondered how they could be moving quietly down a road which was reported as occupied by our troops; but it was no use wondering, so I saddled my reluctant pony and moved on at eleven o'clock. My progress was terribly slow — not more than two miles an hour; I might kick and coax my pony, it was of no avail—the poor beast was stiff and done up. I met the black man driving the sheep, and, finding he could speak English and was talkative, elicited from him the statement that the British troops were in Dewetsdorf, and that I could get water at a small house a mile

farther on. With hope revived I pushed on and stopped at the house. A Dutchman was cleaning pig's trotters and his wife washing some children. The man spoke English perfectly—called himself Steyn—said he belonged to the President's family—told me he was not commandeered—gave me water—insisted on my off-saddling—showed a great aversion to, and wished me to leave, my revolver—told me he had been watching me on the kopje—that a big Boer commando was on the road in front of me —and that I had no chance of getting through. He further urged me to "swop" horses with him and take a fresh one, but after that I mistrusted the man, and, much as I should have enjoyed a drive, I refused his offer of a cart if I would leave my pony. The fact was, I think, he would have liked to take me single-handed, but my height and my pistol rather overawed him. With many misgivings I left the house and struck off the road on to a hill path. I had been moving on for an hour scanning the country with my glasses and noting a great bustle of single horsemen riding in all directions, when the village of Dewetsdorf came into sight,

about ten miles distant. I got off my pony and searched it thoroughly. A big building in the centre, from which a flag was flying, was evidently a church or the landrost's house, but I could not tell the colour of the flag, though the sun lit brightly up the corrugated roofs of a snug little village. What was I to do? I had two alternatives—either to wait till dark and try to reconnoitre the place; or to ride boldly on, see the landrost, and ask for a pass through to Bloemfontein, if the British were not in occupation. I decided on the latter course. I was in dire want of food, and if I once off-saddled I might never get my pony on. Moreover, my fears might have been groundless. So on I went, avoiding the main road and taking a bee-line at a foot's pace for Dewetsdorf. I saw horsemen passing and repassing, and my fears were in no way allayed from the fact that they were not in khaki. They must have seen me too, but they did not trouble themselves to inquire what I was doing, and about three in the afternoon I found myself about a quarter of a mile from the village, and knew that the flag which was flying was that

[redacted]

MY CAPTORS.

"I ALMOST IMAGINED I WAS GOING TO A *CHASSE-AU-CERF* INSTEAD OF TO A DEADLY MAN-HUNT."

of the Orange Free State. To go back was impossible. I resolved to face it out, and seeing a Boer approaching the town from a path which converged with mine, I waited for him, wished him "Good morning," asked him if he would conduct me to the landrost, and told him I was a non-combatant Englishman. He rode in with me, but I liked him not, and I found myself immediately surrounded by twenty armed Boers and a prisoner in their hands. "Who are you?" "Where do you come from?" "You'll have to come with us now," were shouted at me. I explained that I was a journalist and photographer, and I had ridden in to see the landrost. That worthy was in a Cape-cart close by, and I asked him with as much authority as I could muster for a pass through to Bloemfontein. It was no good. He himself, he told me, had been made to hand over the keys to the British the day before, that they had gone early this morning, and that he was now a prisoner of the Boers for having taken the British oath. One man seized my pistol, another my Zeiss glasses, and a third my purse. A fourth, a rough bearded man of an inferior class, who subse-

quently turned out to be the village blacksmith, pulled me off my pony. I was powerless to resist, and bore the indignity with the best grace possible under the circumstances. "Hullo, cocky!" shouted a cheeky youth; "Verdomte Rooinek," hissed a Dutchman in my ear; "How do you like it?" said another, and so it would have continued, but for a man of coarse manner, grey beard, and fifty years, ordering me peremptorily into a cart seated for four, but which already held five! My pony was taken from me with my saddle-bags, holsters, and rug, and all I was left with was my kodak, my water-bottle, and a few shillings in my pocket. "My pony can't go another yard," I said, as I saw a man fully armed jump on to it; "it has already done about seventy miles during the last thirty hours, and I want food. I have had none since the previous night, and I am starving. Surely you can behave like gentlemen." A loud laugh greeted my remonstrance; but one man, kinder than the rest, brought me a cup of coffee and a hunk of bread and cheese for which I had no appetite, while the man who bestrode my pony lashed it un-

mercifully. "Come on, now, we're not going to wait for you any longer," said the old man of fifty, Joubert by name, the field cornet of Dewetsdorf; and I was bustled into the cart with its six mules. Where was I going? I soon found out. An order had been issued for every man to be at a certain place by sundown. There was to be a big fight, and I was to go with them to the main commando, there to see General De Wet, who was in command. I made the best of a bad job and squeezed myself in between the two drivers on a very narrow seat. One of them spoke English fluently. He was called Smuts, and he growled at having been commandeered. He told me the men had no right to take anything from me except my arms, and he *asked* me if I would *give* him my belt or my saddle-bags! There was a certain grim humour which tickled me hugely when at a farmhouse we stopped for tea, and I was asked by the thieves if I would *give* them the articles they had respectively *stolen!* I told them that if I must part with my goods I cared little who had them, and I handed my spurs to another beggar! All I asked for was the little clothing

I had in my saddle-bags, and a friend in need kept his eye on the blacksmith who had got hold of them and rescued them for me. I was the centre of a gaping crowd at the farmhouse. Women and children, black men and white, all came out and stared, so I stared back at them with my trusty kodak, and hope I have got some interesting reminiscences. Had my freedom not been denied me I should have enjoyed the scene, so novel was it to me. Here was an insight into the Boer method of warfare, his dress, accoutrements, and character, I had never anticipated, and you may be sure I made full use of it. My German tuition when a boy stood me in good stead, and I was able to follow much of their conversation. But the most curious feature was that they nearly all talked English, and many were British born with British names, or colonists descended from the great Anglo-Saxon race. And they prided themselves too, these old men of sixty and young boys of sixteen, on fighting against the British; but through all their rough, uneducated, unmannered boasting I think I detected a feeling of utter hope-

lessness of their cause. Some were riding capital ponies, others artillery and cavalry horses with their feet branded with the British regimental numbers—captured in some previous fight. There were men in short coats and boys without any; some on our cavalry saddles, others on blankets only. They were all armed with the well-filled bandolier and Mauser or Martini rifles, and some wore "smasher" and others "billycock" or straw hats. They rode very long in the stirrups. On the pummel of the saddle each man carried his coloured blanket or coat, while well-filled haversacks hung from each side. There were about fifty of this motley crew—mostly farmers, I think—who drank the coffee and swore and smoked and spat on the wooden floor. I was roused from my thoughts by a rough pinch of my shoulder from the field cornet, who ordered me to "get up, Mr Rosslyn." So in I got, and on we jolted towards the rendezvous, which was plainly in sight some six miles distant—a farmhouse nestling under a fringe of kopjes. And the men shouted "Forrard!" and "Tallyho!" and the women who drove cheered them on,

and I almost imagined I was going to a "chasse-au-cerf" instead of to a deadly man-hunt.

We arrived at the Boer rendezvous as the shades of night were fast falling, and the sinking sun lit up a busy row of figures moving hither and thither on the sky-line. The laggards who had accompanied me were quickly ordered up to the front with a word of rebuke, while I received orders to return to Dewetsdorf under the care of the landrost and a man called Villanel, the telegraph clerk, who had also got to answer the Boer general for taking the English oath. It was a curious and, I should imagine, an almost unique incident that I, a prisoner, was sent back in the custody of two other prisoners; but I think my jailers felt their position more seriously than I did mine. At any rate, they both tried to make me comfortable as we started back in the dark, and whilst I listened to them discussing their probable punishment, I began to plan my escape. I had learnt that the British force had only left this morning from Dewetsdorf, and was believed to be on the road to Reddersburg. It was their departure which had caused the

summoning of this Boer commando, whose intention it was to cut off this little British force if possible. The fight was expected next morning. I gleaned that the British had no guns, that the Boer commando was then about 1400 strong, and would be reinforced during the night by another 800 with six guns. I heard, too, of a British defeat at the Waterworks near Sannah's Post the previous Saturday, when, according to the Boer version, we had lost 800 killed and wounded and 400 prisoners, and they had also captured waggons, varying in number from 75 to 205, and nine guns, their own loss being one killed and two wounded—the usual number! How could I get to our force to warn them of the impending danger? Here was an opportunity I must risk at all costs. I had asked many questions and been answered quite frankly, my captors never dreaming of my possible escape, and I knew the direction of Reddersburg and still had my compass. I was in this reverie when we pulled up at a small farmhouse, my guards declaring it impossible to go farther in the dark, so we outspanned and entered the farm, and were

given, after a very long Dutch grace, German sausages, bread, butter, and fresh milk, whilst half-a-dozen daughters with an unprepossessing mother waited on us. The conversation was all in Dutch, but I gathered they were talking of me and of my guards' position, which they felt acutely. We went early to bed, and any hope of escape vanished when I found we all three had to sleep in one little room. Oh, the stuffiness of it! They wanted me to share the big bed, but I preferred the floor, and, tired out, I slept till five, when we started again for Dewetsdorf. My jailers were even more friendly, and discussed their own feelings to me so interestedly that I soon saw how the cat jumped, and that they were more afraid of falling into the British than the Boer hands. I saw my game, and I bluffed accordingly. I told them that if it had been discovered that they had left Dewetsdorf without a pass they would either be shot by the British or banished to St Helena, but I added coaxingly, "If you like, I will go down the road to Reddersburg, catch them up, and explain matters for you, so that nothing

PETER KELLY, HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW, AND FAMILY
AT THEIR FARM.

MOSAR'S KOPJE.
Drawn, from a description, by John Beer.

will happen." It was a master-stroke. They were overjoyed, and agreed. The question was, "How was I to go? and how far was it before I could strike the Reddersburg road?" They couldn't drive to the road without going through Dewetsdorf, and that was no good to me or them. So they found two blacks and paid them five shillings to take me a mile or two over the veldt and show me the road. They also gave me the position of a farm belonging to one Peter Kelly, an Englishman, who they said would help me on. A hearty handshake and I was off, hungry but thrilled at my good fortune, yet all the time dreading my ability to reach any friends on foot and armed only with my kodak and an empty water-bottle. I had gone a couple of miles when one of my guides signalled to me to lie down, and not far from me a Boer passed across the open ground. On we went again, and by ten o'clock I saw not only the road but the trees round Peter Kelly's farm about six miles off. I had to pass several other homesteads, but there was nothing for it, so I parted with my guides and set off at a fast

walk. Though I met two or three dangerous-looking customers, they were unarmed and let me go unmolested; and at midday, hot, hungry, thirsty, and exhausted, I threw myself on Peter Kelly's mercy, and told him my story. He promised to send me through in a cart, and told me the British force had camped at his farm the previous night and left that morning at five for Reddersburg, which was a little more than a two hours' drive. He thought the road quite clear; and this blessed, good-natured Irishman, who had, however, fought against us at Stormberg, received my warmest thanks as I started off at 1 o'clock on Tuesday, April 3.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BATTLE OF MOSAR'S HOEK, REDDERSBURG.

I START FOR REDDERSBURG — BUILDING CASTLES IN THE AIR — I AM ATTACKED FROM BOTH SIDES — MY HORSES ARE SHOT — A RUN FOR LIFE — THE POSITION OF AFFAIRS — CAUGHT ON THE MARCH — A SUMMONS TO SURRENDER — SURROUNDED — A NARROW ESCAPE — THE LAST DROP OF WATER — A TERRIBLE NIGHT — THE SECOND DAY — A HOPEFUL SOUND — M'WHINNIE'S GALLANTRY — THE ROYAL IRISH RIFLES FIGHT BRILLIANTLY — A MURDEROUS FIRE — WE SURRENDER — A COMPLIMENT — CHRISTIAN DE WET — THE LAST SCENE.

April 3 *and* 4. — I was just beginning to congratulate myself on my good luck, and to count the minutes (it was 3 o'clock) before I should be in Reddersburg (then about six miles distant),—I had even gone so far as to build castles in the air of a champagne dinner with the officers of the detachment at Mr Hoffman's hotel to celebrate my escape,—

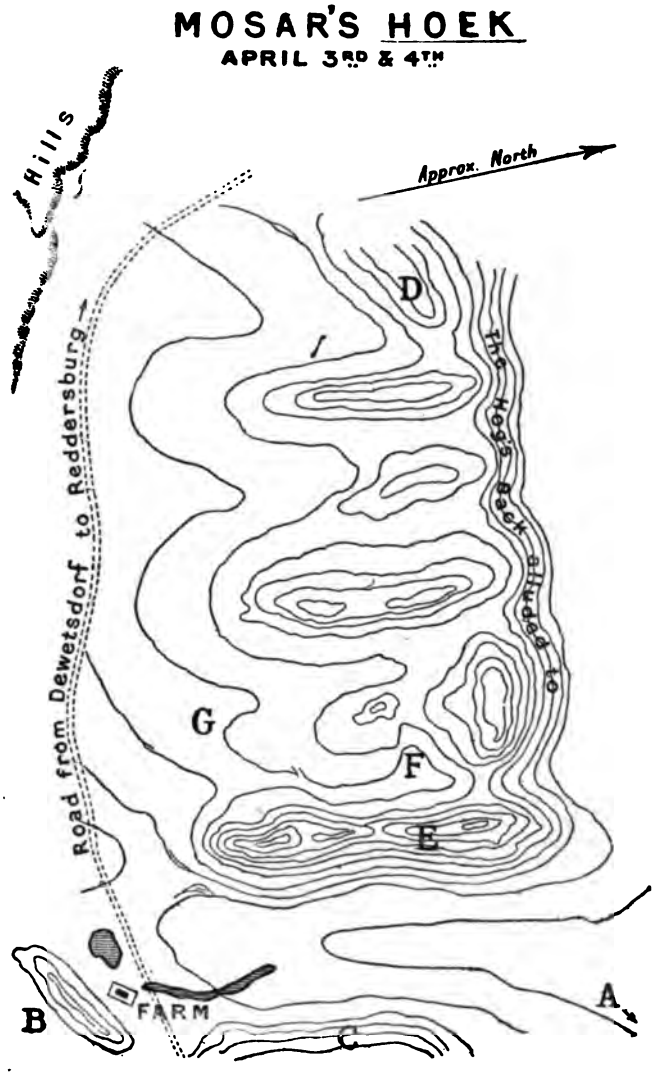
when, entering into a somewhat confined portion of the road, I heard a "ping" on my right, and a bullet struck the ground just in front of my horse's feet. Hoping it was from a distant sniper, I moved on quickly, when, from my left this time, came another crack of a rifle right over my head. At the same moment the union-jack and Red Cross flags floated lazily out on the still breeze, with the ambulance waggons immediately beneath them. All this, as you may imagine, was the work of a second, and I at once realised that the forces I had heard of at Dewetsdorf and Kelly's farm had been attacked on the march. In a twinkling I turned the horses' heads for our ambulance, pulled out a white handkerchief, and galloped to the right over the intervening plain. I had barely moved before three bullets passed through my cart from the left, and another, from the right this time, killed both my horses. I couldn't stay where I was, so calling out to a man I saw on the right kopje, "Don't fire; I'm English," I jumped from the cart and ran for all I knew to some safe place of hiding, amid a perfect hail of Boer bullets. I

clambered breathless over a wire fence, and threw myself down behind some stones for shelter, and when I was able to speak I soon found my worst fears realised, and that the action had been in progress for fully five hours. As I wish to give you a full description of the battle, I must recount the events which preceded my arrival, as they were subsequently told me by the surviving officers. It appears that they left their bivouac at Kelly's farm at 5 o'clock that morning, and with the mounted infantry as advance-guard had continued their march to Reddersburg. The little force of about 500 men consisted of three companies of the Royal Irish Rifles and about 150 of the 5th Fusiliers and Royal Irish Rifles mounted infantry with 11 officers, the whole being under the command of Captain M'Whinnie. They had six waggons drawn by oxen and mules, one water-cart and two ammunition-carts, with three ambulances and as many doctors under Captains Hearn and Temple Smyth.

Everything had gone smoothly till about 10 o'clock, when the scouts reported a cloud of dust on the open plain to the right of the road

at the spot marked "A" on the accompanying map, which has kindly been furnished me by an officer. At the same time the mounted infantry were fired on from their left front, and at once took up a position on a small piece of rising ground marked "B" to the left of the road, while the Irish Rifles seized a small kopje, "C," on the right. Seeing a more favourable position, and to prevent if possible their being commanded by the enemy's fire, Captain M'Whinnie ordered the mounted infantry to push on and seize the farther or westernmost spur, "D," of a larger hill on the right (called Mosar's kopje), while the Irish Rifles themselves moved on to the easternmost spur, "E," to guard their rear. This kopje formed the end of a long range of hills stretching to the west, while on the opposite side of the road was another range of high hills sloping down at the eastern end to the point the mounted infantry originally took up, marked "B."

It was not quite in this formation I found them, for the commanding officer, having examined his position, had spread his men out so that the centre kopje, running like "a hog's


MOSAR'S HOEK
APRIL 3RD & 4TH
Hills
Approx. North
D
The Hog's Back attacked to
Road from Dewetsdorf to Reddersburg
G
F
E
A
B
FARM
C

back" between the two spurs, was also held by part of the force. Having parked the transport waggons and ambulances at the spots marked "F" and "G," it was soon evident from the increased transvergent fire that they were being hotly attacked from two sides. Our men immediately replied with long-range volleys, and it was at this early period of the day that Lieutenant Barclay was killed. By one o'clock the Boer rifle fire got hotter and hotter from both the eastern and western flanks, and it was then that they got their first gun into position about 2800 yards to the north-east. A few well-directed volleys from our men, however, soon caused the gun to be shifted to a more respectful distance.

A messenger brought a letter from General de Wet informing Captain M'Whinnie that the Boer force was 2200 men with six guns, and demanding our surrender. The letter was immediately torn into little bits, and a verbal reply typical of the British officer returned to the Boer general. Another gun soon came into action on the same side as the first, and it was apparent to all that our situation was a

critical one. It was about three o'clock, when the long-range fire was at its height, that I made my inopportune arrival on the scene, and was saluted from both sides by a shower of bullets. I crawled to where an officer was sitting, and gave him all the information I had gathered the previous night, and as far as possible from behind the stones I collected, I examined the position. The kopjes which I have already described were horse-shoe shaped, and I was somewhere about the centre. The bullets were coming in thick from the opposite hills, and singing merrily as they passed over the "hog's back" from our rear. They were enfilading us, too, from the north-east and south-west, and I soon recognised that our position was a hopeless one unless reinforcements came to our rescue. The officers were working coolly and cheerily, and the men firing with the greatest accuracy when opportunity arose, but our fire was never wasted, and the enemy took good care to keep as far away from us as possible till late in the evening, when a third gun was brought up to the south where we were lying. It was a fortun-

been wounded in the head and throat, and that Captain Casson, who was generously tending his fallen comrade, had been shot dead. Darkness came on, and with it a diminution in the enemy's fire, but in the twilight we could discern them creeping nearer and nearer to the doomed kopje and completely surrounding us. Keeping well away from the sky-line, we were able for the first time for eight hours to shift our cramped positions, but the men could light no fires, and the water-cart, someway distant among the transport, was carefully guarded in case of a prolonged siege. Though the men were sorely in need of both food and water, they bore their trouble with the greatest fortitude, and so tired were they that many were soon asleep, and were with difficulty found and roused to take up their positions on picquet. A consultation of officers was held, which I was privileged to attend, and it was then for the first time I met the commanding officer, Captain M'Whinnie. The possibilities of reinforcements arriving, the probabilities of cutting our [illegible] through successfully to Reddersb[illegible] despatch of a scout for assistan

cussed, and I have no hesitation in saying that, even if we had left our transport, the second course would have been attended with fearful loss.

Finally, it was decided to trust to Providence, to hold our position on the chance of reinforcements arriving in the morning from either north or south, and to despatch a scout to Bethanie, *viâ* Reddersburg, to ask for assistance. We heard then that our losses were trifling—about 7 or 8—but poor Captain Dimsdale's wounds were very serious, and he was carried down unconscious to the ambulance, it having been impossible to move him any earlier. Captain M'Whinnie, after digging unsuccessfully with Captain Tennant and others for a supposed well, gave orders that water should be served out of the cart at 4.30 in the morning, and then the pickets were carefully posted all round our position in groups of six. A kindly officer lent me a sweater to try and [illegible] but sleep was practically [illegible] few got an hour o[illegible] The night [illegible] and no coats [illegible]d. A

man struggling to keep warm cuddled up against me, much to my delight, only, however, to push me into a neighbouring thorn-bush; and then the moon rose for the third time this month, and shed a lurid light over the grim scene. I would have closed my eyes after her treacherous treatment when I crossed the Caledon river, but I could not. I thought of home, and wondered if home thought of me. I was trying to collect my thoughts, when some one asked me how I was. I asked if he were the doctor and could tie up my foot? He was unfortunately only the Wesleyan minister! Good man, no doubt! But I had no need of shriving, however much I suffered, and I was not the only sufferer. Lord bless you, no! There were hundreds who deserved greater sympathy than I did. Many a prayer must have been said for success, but many a curse I heard at the name of the General who had allowed this small detachment to travel through a hostile country without guns and without supports. Then the moon winked and went out, and all was silence, but what a silence! God grant I may never pass a

night such as the one I tried to sleep through on April 3rd!

At six o'clock the first shot was fired. Why do they shoot so early? Why don't the Boers sleep? And as the crack, crack, crack of the Mauser and Lee-Metford rifles betokened that the mounted infantry on the western spur were being hotly engaged, the morning sun rose over Mosar's Hoek on a day of murder and surrender.

Bang! bang! crash! and the first shrapnel of April 4 found its mark, while a man's life-blood spluttered over my tunic. Bang! bang! this time from another direction, and the shell hurtled over the hill-top and burst close to two startled secretary-birds upon the plain beyond. Bang! bang! again, and two projectiles seemed to meet each other in mid-air over the kopje, and burst with a terrific detonation.

An hour after the sun rose the air was alive with bullets screaming in every direc-tion, and, as we expected, from [illegible] range. Our men were game en[illegible] fight, and 400 British rifles were [illegible] away at a practically invisible fo[illegible]

"What's that? Did you hear it?" said an Irishman close to my elbow; and the fact that he had heard too what I had imagined raised my hopes, and my head too, but I soon put the latter down again! It was the rattle of volley firing. Could it be the British advancing from Bloemfontein? It was too good to be true, but the Boers rarely indulged in volleys. We strained our ears more hopefully than ever, and again we thought that amid the crackle of musketry and the booming of the big guns we heard a repetition of the sound. We were, however, doomed to disappointment. So the fight went on—this battle of five to one and of four guns against none. The second hour succeeded the first, and the third was just commencing, when a tremendous fusilade from the mounted infantry position on the west betokened an unusual amount of activity. Shelter on the north side of the hog's back was no longer procurable, and it was a case of lying flat as a pancake during the now gathering hailstorm of bullets. From all sides we were enfiladed! If a man showed his head he was shot dead. There was not a stone unsmeared

with a leaden coating. The whistling and shrieking of the Mauser and Martini bullets were accentuated by the fury of the artillery fire, which searched every corner of the besieged kopje. Nearer and nearer did they close in on us, and gallantly did our men reply. Captain M'Whinnie seemed to court a certain death, moving from section to section, dragging the ammunition up to the mounted infantry, and helping to carry down the wounded. It was a miracle he escaped. Many other instances of coolness and bravery amongst officers and men—young ones too—I might recount during this fearful bombardment, but their names are unknown to me. Those who were there will never forget that the Royal Irish Rifles and the Fighting Fifth gallantly upheld the best traditions of the British Army.

I was wondering what the end would be. Death appeared absolutely certain. There seemed no hope, when suddenly — —
a crack—ping, crack—pin
different sound to any
and the stones near m
little round bullet-mark

one," said a Tommy, as he crouched still lower to the ground, and a bullet splash in the rock to the right of him bespoke the truth of his remark. "Who's sniping us on our left?" shouted an officer just above me. "That's just what we all want to know," I answered. We knew it soon enough. A man next me raised his head to have a look, and rolled over me dead as a stone. For the last hour, from eight to nine, we had been lying under this murderous, terrible, enfilading fire, when word was passed that the mounted infantry had been driven in and were prisoners. We held out as long as we could, but a white flag was soon hoisted, and then another, and a distant shout proclaimed that we had surrendered. Thank God, it was over! We had surrendered, but with all the honours of war! Bradford, a gallant young officer, was wounded at the very end. For close on twenty-four hours had this little detachment been besieged by a force nearly five times its own size, and no wonder General De Wet paid Captain M'Whinnie the compliment of saying, "How splendidly you have fought!"

As I rose from the ground the word was passed, "Disarm yourselves, men," and stripped of rifles, pouches, side-arms, and bandoliers, we made our way proudly but silently through the swarming Boers to our ambulances at the bottom of the hill. The last scene was one not easy to forget. Here an excited Boer, greedy for loot, was demanding the surrender of private property. There two men were carrying a poor fellow to the hospital, groaning from a bullet in his leg. A Boer was stretched out on the lead-covered grass quite dead. Some officers were pointing out to the stretcher-bearers the position of some of our wounded, and the doctors were busy attending to the urgent calls of those who had already been brought in. Each man spoke to his pal in whispered tones. A few unthinking individuals, whose parched mouths alone were sufficient to make them forgetful of their wounded comrades, made a rush for the water-cart near the ambulance, but a word of remonstrance from the doctor soon put that little matter right. Others made for the waggons, to secure, if possible

great-coats, and to share in the little bully-beef and biscuit they had been denied so long, which the Boers were already looting. I sat down on a stone, half dazed by the scene, my mind and brain whirling in the confusion of the events of the past three days. Mechanically I opened my camera, which I had still with me, and mechanically it clicked at the various changing scenes.

General De Wet, an undistinguished-looking man, with a black pointed beard, surrounded by an equally undistinguished staff, had mounted a waggon, and was declaiming to an excited mob of armed Boers the greatness of his victory, and his thanks to God. Loud cheers greeted his remarks, and then from 2000 throats came the deep sonorous chant of the Volkslied, or National Anthem, which grated on my ears. An official told us to fall in. We were promised immunity from theft and blackmail. What cant! Some of the officers rode, others walked. I drove on a waggon, owing to the pain in my foot. "Hullo, photographer!" said a cheeky Boer to me, whom I recognised as one of my

previous day captors. "How did you get here? Who let you go? Why aren't you at Dewetsdorf?" I was soon surrounded by a gaping crowd. I held my peace, but when the opportunity arrived I stated my position to an official, who promised me consideration of my case. And then the Basuto boy driving my waggon rolled his eyes ominously, and pointed to the dead Boer, for whom a grave was being dug. I saw him buried. Very reverently they did it. Uncovered in the burning sun, they stood around some one who spoke the dead man's eulogy. They wrapped him in his red blanket, and they said Amen. Yes, they were human enough, these rough men of the veldt. I noticed the wheels of my waggon were revolving — I passed a 15-pounder on the road which had once belonged to us — I heard some one say we had lost about 60 killed and wounded — I wondered at my luck — I drank a little water at a stream, and a kindly Boer gave me bread — I was in a dream — and I forgot all but my sym- for the dejected officers and men.

CHAPTER XVII.

WE ARE MARCHED TO PRETORIA.

OUR FIRST NIGHT IN CAPTIVITY—TOMMY ATKINS CHEERS UP—HERDED IN A SHEEP-KRAAL—AT THABA NCHU—A COMMENT—WONDERFUL BOER STORIES—ABOUT THE FREE STATERS—COMMANDANT GROBLER—BERGSTEDT AND GERLACH—I BORROW MONEY—BROTHER FREEMASONS—A LEVÉE AT KROONSTAD STATION—ARRIVAL IN PRETORIA—THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE—I PART FROM MY FRIENDS—A TRANSVAAL POLICEMAN—I FORGET TO CONCEAL MY DIARY.

April 4-12.—I have come to another kind of experience in my travels through South Africa, and I may say that though a prisoner in the Boer hands, I have passed a week not a whit less interesting than the others I have recorded. The Boer commando melted away as quickly as it arrived to celebrate its victory; a detachment was told off to accompany us, and we were informed that our

destination was Winburg by road, and thence by rail to Pretoria. Mr Thring (who told me he was sorry to be a relative of Lord Thring), Mr Chase, the Adjutant, and General De Wet himself, were as courteous to us as possible, and promised us ponies to ride next day and the return of our personal property which had been taken from us. That they meant what they promised I have no doubt, but they left us to the tender mercies of a field cornet and a guard, who were either unable to carry out the promises or had not the inclination to do so. The result was that officers and men had to trudge for some hours over the veldt, carrying not only their coats and other articles but the weight of their despair as well. I was in great pain with my sprained foot and wrist, and after doing my best to keep up for a couple of hours, a friendly Boer lent me his pony. Subsequently we were all allowed to ride on the waggons, as well as those of the men who were sick or footsore. It took our captors a long time to arrange on which waggon it was to be, and we were mounted and dis-

mounted from at least three before we started again. I think the Boers were afraid we might re-arm ourselves when we got on to the one which contained the men's rifles!

When it became dark (we had been marching fully three hours) we were ordered to dismount and march again, an order at which we remonstrated in vain. What the idea of this was I do not know, except that we were told "we must all walk at night"! At about 8 o'clock we halted, and with difficulty got our valises, though I had nothing except what I wore. For nearly two hours we had to wait for food, and then the men, I fear, got practically nothing, there being only eight loaves of bread for about 450 men. Lieutenant Soutry let me share his valise, and another officer lent me a warm jersey, but we passed a miserably cold damp night by the edge of a lake to which we had been brought. We were, I knew, close by Peter Kelly's farm, and I believe two or three men succeeded in escaping in the darkness of the night. I think the idea of attempting the same thing occurred to

CHRISTIAN DE WET [illegible] APRIL 1902.

GENERAL CHRISTIAN DE WET DECLAIMING THE GREATNESS OF HIS VICTORY AT REDDERSBURG.

more than one of the officers, but the thought of the subsequent treatment which might in consequence be meted out to their "pals" made them desist. For my part, there were three reasons why I did not try: (1) General De Wet knew I was a non-combatant, and had promised to consider my application for release the next day; (2) I had no pony, and was much too lame to walk far; and (3) I had every hope of our being rescued on the road, and had nothing to gain and everything to lose by the attempt. It was only by strong remonstrance and reminding our field cornet that General De Wet had promised we should not travel by night that we did not start till 5 o'clock next morning. They wanted us at first to march at two in the morning, but the men were so completely done up, having eaten nothing to speak of for forty-eight hours, that it would have been impossible to drag them along.

Next morning we marched till ten, and stopped at a farm-house about four miles from Dewetsdorf, where sixteen sheep and plenty of bread were served out. It was

worth being there to note the difference in Tommy Atkins. From the draggled, morose, bitter, and saddened soldier, he changed at once into the forgetful, cheerful, well-filled man. Such is the effect of a good meal, and a dirty pond in which we all bathed. Not so the officers. Poor chaps! I was sorry for them. They had but one topic, arguing and debating for a long time whether they could be blamed for the disaster. I resolved to cheer them up if I could, and I think, till Pretoria was in sight, I succeeded fairly well. I got our field cornet — who, by the way, was changed that day — to send down to Dewetsdorf for a few luxuries, but we couldn't get any whisky! Some candles, tea, jam, matches, tobacco, a cooking pot and kettle, were what reached us at the next stage, when at night we were herded in a sheep kraal near a farm, which, I believe, once belonged to De Wet himself. Surrounded by a high wall, the interior was filthy in the extreme, but we got a big waterproof sheet stretched over a corner of it, and ate bread and butter and

jam, and slept, huddled together, while the rain pelted mercilessly on the wretched men. De Wet himself came to the farm that night, but left so suddenly that I had no opportunity of seeing him. He had gone after his victory to try and surround another British force between Edenburg and Wepener, and we supposed that now again he had hurried back to his commando.

Our new field cornet, Meyer by name, was a very decent fellow, and though he could not speak English, he did all he could to make us comfortable. We never got our promised ponies, nor our personal property, except the valises, but we did not travel at night, and a waggon was always reserved for the officers, and another for the men who could not walk. I think a good many tried to malinger, but I was not surprised when I took into consideration poor Tommy's position. We were made to march about seven hours every day, always halting before the sun was at its height for three or four hours, when we cooked our fresh meat and washed ourselves.

Our road went by Thaba Nchu, but it was midday on Saturday before we reached this village, and after that I gave up all hope of being rescued. Our field cornet was again changed there, but before going he allowed his adjutant, a Mr Rhom (who has a brother, a chemist, in Cape Town), to take Captain M'Whinnie and myself into the village to buy fresh stores. So we stood him and ourselves an excellent meal at the inn, which was one chair short for the number of its guests; and Mr Crossthwaite, a Liverpool missionary, also lunched with us. I was astonished at the number of British names over the shops, and I must say every one was most anxious to supply us with what we wanted; but beyond a very few articles we could find nothing we required, the force which had been there a week previously having bought up everything! One tradesman told me that Lord Talbot (I suppose it was Lord Edmund) had ridden in first, and ordered everything for the household troops. Just their luck! I digress for a moment to comment on the British policy of seizing

places and then evacuating them, after having exacted the oath from the inhabitants not to take up arms. Thaba Nchu and Dewetsdorf, and even Ladybrand, are places within my knowledge where the most serious consequences have resulted to the town's-people, who have subsequently been subjected to imprisonment and other punishment by the Boers when they returned. Wepener, too, is another instance. I know the difficulties the British arms have to meet with, but it can never be said that this is a method of inspiring confidence or giving fairplay to a people who, sitting between two stools, are happier "as they were than as they are." That all this will come right in the end I have no doubt, and I hope the Boer Government realised the difficult position in which some of these inhabitants were placed by the British, and dealt leniently with them accordingly. At Thaba Nchu, when the British evacuation took place, the English attestants were ordered to follow, and were, owing to the disaster at Sannah's Post, basely deserted, and subsequently im-

prisoned by the Boers. The landrost at Dewetsdorf, too (my old jailer), was placed under arrest for handing over his keys to the British, who then left hurriedly; and the wretched inhabitants of Ladybrand were sent to Kroonstad for trial for delivering up their arms when Colonel Pilcher bagged the landrost and field cornet.

We were lucky in having fine weather on our tramp to Winburg, as we camped on the veldt every night, and, all things considered, did ourselves remarkably well. The Boer guard paid us the compliment of talking to us, and sometimes joined us at meals, for which I undertook the duties of mess-president. On these occasions we tried to get all possible information from them, but when we said "good night" it was all we could do to refrain from laughing at the absurdity of their concoctions. I do not think it would be uninteresting to relate a few of these wonderful Boer versions, which were either narrated to depress us or genuinely believed by our captors. The Boer method of suppressing news is undoubtedly of importance to their cause, but

will they not some day pay the penalty for duping their fighting men by exaggerating their victories, minimising their losses, and giving scanty and inefficient details of their defeats? We were told two days after our surrender that General De Wet had taken 900 prisoners from Brabant's force near Wepener, and that our losses were 400 killed and wounded. In fact, we were informed we might have to wait at Thaba Nchu for this addition to the prisoner roll. Yet by the latest accounts we have heard here at Pretoria, (1) De Wet has surrounded this British force, but the battle is not over, and (2) De Wet is himself surrounded! This latter has only "leaked out," and is not official! On another occasion we were told that serious European complications had arisen, that Russia had invaded India, and that Lord Roberts and the whole of his force had started for that country. Moreover, Kitchener was dead or seriously wounded; Buller had been invalided home and his forces withdrawn from Natal; while Kimberley was once more in the enemies' hands. After [illegible] we believed little. We were at a later p[illegible]

of our march told an amusing story in connection with Cronje's capture, and the escape from Paardeberg of one of our guard. The story arose through our asking him where he had got a badge—a sphinx—which he was wearing in his hat. "I escape through the British lines," he told us, "I shoot to the right, I shoot to the left" (demonstrating with his rifle). "My pony gallop right on. Your chaps never hit me." "How many did you kill?" I asked. "I do not know, my pony go so quick! But when I get nearly through, an officer gallop after me. I thought he come to shoot me, and I stop to shoot him, but he cry out, 'Do not shoot,' and then he tell me he wish to be prisoner, not like fighting, wish to get away. So I took him, as he was, armed, to the nearest commando, and hand him over. But while we ride he say, 'I give you this memento of the fight;' and he pin badge from his coat in my hat. I not ask his name, or his regiment, but he at Pretoria now"! Needless to say, the officers assured him they would search for this renegade when they arrived!

I have little more to add about this stage of

FIELD-CORNET POTGIETER, O.F.S.
Under whose charge we were marched to Winburg as prisoners.

SOME OF OUR GUARDS.

our journey to Pretoria. We passed through a flat, grassy, treeless country, meeting with few farms, and those we did belonged chiefly to people of English or Scotch names. Now and again we saw natural strategical positions long enough to contain an army corps and strong enough to withstand the frontal attack of ten such corps. We lived from hand to mouth, milk and bread being very uncertain commodities, though we got plenty of fresh meat and butter, which we were not expected to pay for. Our guard, under the command (for the last three days) of Field Cornet Potgieter, were very civil and obliging; and I would specially mention a man named Erasmus, a Free State policeman, who cursed the war and did many little things for us. They are a curious people, these Free Staters, ignorant and yet cunning, kind-hearted in many ways yet grasping and almost vicious in others. Poor I have no doubt they are, for the most part belonging to the farmer class, and I have no hesitation in saying that the majority are sick of the war. They are all commandeered, are unpaid, and have very

arduous duties to perform. They speak bitterly of Mr Fraser, the newly appointed magistrate of Bloemfontein, and the political opponent of President Steyn; and the latter they all characterise as a man of education and a thorough gentleman. I do not think, when the Orange Free State is ours and the inhabitants are disarmed, we shall have much difficulty in getting them to settle down under our method of government, nor do I believe they will fight for the Transvaal once they are driven up to the border. Their habits do not appear very cleanly, but they are evidently men who take off their coats to their work, even if they lack the two great necessities for a flourishing country—brains and industrial enterprise. Everything we bought on the road was branded with the Scotch or English trade mark—from jam even to the oatmeal with which we made porridge!

We came in sight of Winburg on Tuesday, April 10, having marched six days. The road, instead of continuing through an apparently endless flat, entered into some pretty wooded scenery, with large kopjes on either side. We

were not allowed to enter Winburg that night, but Commandant Grobler drove out and paid us a visit, and brought us a bottle of whisky. There was a general rush for pannikins, and the forbidden liquor soon disappeared, much to the amusement of our kind donor, who told us he was buying horses in the neighbourhood, and had not been on the scene of operations for two months. The public prosecutor also turned up on his bicycle. He spoke English well, and told me the landrost, to whom I had sent three telegrams, to be forwarded to President Steyn, the American consul at Pretoria, and the 'Cape Times,' had forwarded them all to President Steyn for consideration.

Next morning we started early through the town, and the officers were taken to the hotel for breakfast, where, after a wash and an excellent meal under the supervision of a German policeman, they were told they might go to a store and buy what they wanted before the train left. After I had seen the landrost, a grumpy official, I joined them at Messrs Bergstedt & Gerlach's. There we were able to buy anything, from a flannel shirt to a pr-

entation pipe. The head of the firm, Mr Bergstedt, was most courteous, and proved to be the member for Winburg in the Free State Raad. I had a long talk with him on political matters, but only elicited the old story that England had been too precipitate, and that President Kruger had promised the reforms, and had visited some of the largest centres to address meetings for this purpose, even after what was called "Mr Chamberlain's bellicose speech." He spoke very highly of President Steyn's qualities, and assured me I should soon be set free, which raised my hopes considerably. He also asked me if I wanted money, and, being penniless and a would-be purchaser, he lent me £10 on my note of hand *without interest*—a form of borrowing I had been unable to negotiate for at least three years! It was at this shop that I was presented with a case containing a pipe by two of our guard. I did not at the time realise why, but I imagined it was because I had at their request taken a snapshot of them with my kodak. Having bought a clean shirt, hair, nail, and tooth brushes, a sponge, some tobacco, and writing materials,

we were marched to the station. It was quite two hours after the appointed time before we started. The scramble for seats the men made at the station reminded me of a rush at Waterloo on a Kempton race day, so great was their apparent eagerness to reach Pretoria. The officers had a first-class corridor carriage reserved for them, and a compartment adjoining for their servants; so no complaint could be made on the lack of civility or comfort. While we were waiting, a turkey, two chickens, and some fresh bread and butter were sent down to us by a few English residents—a kindness we much appreciated; and it was then I was able to realise the strength of fellowship which binds Freemasons. The general superintendent of the line, Mr Cooper, an Irishman and an old cavalry man, brought me a flannel shirt, a bottle of whisky, and some newspapers, as a token; and the station-master, a Belfast man, by name Darragh, was courtesy itself, and gave me a bottle of Cape brandy. They had to smuggle these in, and were not allowed to s[illegible] openly, but I gathered that the F[illegible] dents would have given us a symp[illegible]

off had they been allowed to. The men who gave me the pipe also proved to be Freemasons. Truly a friend in need is a friend indeed.

We started about midday, stopping at various stations, where gaping crowds were turned away from the carriage windows by our guards, and we reached Kroonstad about six the same evening in darkness. The country through which we passed was flat as a pancake. At Kroonstad the officers were taken to the refreshment-room, and we held a kind of levée after an excellent dinner, also provided by an English firm of contractors. The landrost—a hard-voiced, rough-mannered man—came first, and announced that my case had come before the War Council that day, but that, owing to certain irregularities on Lord Roberts's part in imprisoning some landrosts, "my release must be delayed till they knew what he was going to do with them." In vain I urged that these were political prisoners, and that I was not. The matter had to rest in abeyance. I asked that a telegram to the 'Cape Times' and to Lord Roberts should be

sent for me, but I do not know if my request was executed.

Then came the landrost of Ottoshoop, near Mafeking, who insisted on shaking hands with all of us (Captain M'Whinnie and I thought this was to find out which were Masons, by the grip); and after several others had said "How do you do?" we were introduced to the landrost of Jacobsdal, who had been on leave for two months. He told us his house had been looted and his furniture destroyed by the British — an aggression we could scarcely believe; but I have since heard there was a great deal of treachery on the part of the inhabitants the day before we took possession, and Tommy Atkins was not slow to revenge it. The commissioner of police told us that the name of their Minister for War was Roberts, and, like our Commander-in-Chief, they had nicknamed him "Lord Bobs."

The remainder of our journey to Pretoria was uneventful. Some of us played ch[illegible] a board and men we had bought at [illegible] and the rest of the time was spen[illegible]

queen in the fairy tale — eating bread and honey. We passed through the great Rand industry at Elandsfontein, and saw a few mines working and still more lying idle; and about one o'clock the sight of forts on adjacent kopjes warned us we were arriving at the end of our journey. A neat row of red-tiled houses on one side, and a distant peep of some buildings on the other, was all I saw of Pretoria before we drew up in the station.

A big burly man—Du Toit by name—asked if we were the officers, and on our replying in the affirmative, he told us to get out and fall in. "Fall in?" queried Captain M'Whinnie indignantly. "What do you mean?" "Fall in in twos or fours," was the curt reply. A gaping but orderly crowd watched us as our valises were passed out on to the platform; and then a smart-looking official in ordinary dress, who turned out to be Bredelle, the chief commissioner of police, arrived on the scene and took down our names. "Eight of you, are there not?" he asked in good English. "Nine" was the reply, "including Lord Rosslyn,

is a correspondent and non-combatant." "I will vouch for it," added Captain M'Whinnie, as the head of the police looked me suspiciously up and down. "We have heard of you—you can get back into the train," was all he said. So I said good-bye to my friends, hoping I was going to be freed, and expressing regret at my separation. I asked where I was going, and whether I should be fed; and was told my journey would only last another five minutes, and that I should get food, while if all was satisfactory I should probably be liberated the next day. This was consoling; but I had visions of Waterval, where the men are taken to, and for once since my capture I regretted I was a non-combatant and not an officer.

I saw the last of my prison associates as they were marched in twos through the crowd, and got back into my carriage silently and sadly. "Poor chaps!" [illegible] hinkin[illegible] hey will be here a long tim[illegible] they feel th[illegible] sorry fo[illegible] tained [illegible]

had made, and once more Mrs Harter's fine poem flashed back to my mind,—

> "And hearts find relief in the union of grief,
> When the men fight and die side by side."

I was roused from my thoughts by a gruff voice, "Sit dere." I looked up. It was a wicked-looking uniformed Transvaal policeman! In his hand was a rifle; over his shoulder a well-filled bandolier. I disliked that man from the moment I saw him. "Sit dere," he repeated, pointing to the opposite seat. I glared at him, but I obeyed. Why one seat was not as good as the other, I failed to comprehend. If I looked out of the window, he said, "Look here, not dere." When we reached the next station, he shouted at me, "Get out," at the same time bringing his rifle to the shoulder. I got out. He wouldn't help me to get my valise out—not he; but one of the Free State guard did. As I was lame, and didn't know how far off my destination was, I determined not to walk, but to drive at the expense of the Z. A. R. So he sent a boy

to telephone for a cab. The cabman, sensible man, wouldn't come (the boy said) unless he was to be "bethalt," which I think meant "paid"! Here was a dilemma, but the policeman acquiesced. If I turned my head, the policeman looked to see where I was looking. If I pulled out my tobacco-pouch, he had to satisfy himself it did not contain gunpowder. If I moved a step, he did ditto. I veritably believe if he had had a bayonet he would have stuck it into me. So I sat down on my valise, and took good care to see there was no room for him to sit too. He eyed my kodak suspiciously, and then the carriage and pair arrived. The man asked for prepayment, but this was disallowed. The policeman again declined to lift my valise on to the carriage. He was too great a swell! I got in modestly with my knees doubled up, and sitting bolt upright. He got in and stretched himself lazily out on the seat next me! A two minutes' drive brought me to a building with a turnstile, adjoining [illegible] armed guard presided, and [illegible]

flag fluttered in the breeze. A crowd inside was composed of more Transvaalers, and I thought I recognised English faces amongst them. "Three shillings," said the policeman. "Got no money," was my reply, telling an awful cracker, and my hated policeman had to disgorge; but he got it back from the gatekeeper, I am sorry to say, and to him I was indebted. "Open your valise," came from the inside guard; but I let him search it himself. All he took was the 'Standard and Diggers' News,' which had been given me, as he said no papers were allowed. I was congratulating myself that he had left me my diary, which, if taken, might in the eyes of a bigoted Boer have caused me trouble. "Take him to the doctor;" and round the building I went, where I found Mr De Santos, the assistant-surgeon, who kindly fed me and looked after my comfort.

I had been here an hour when a message came that I was to surrender all my papers. I had had every opportunity of concealing them, and had not done so; so about ten

thousand words of manuscript, which comprise the previous four chapters, from the day I left Maseru, were taken from me and sent to the commissioner of police to be investigated, and returned if satisfactory, and I was left to start a fresh chapter of my captivity.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT THE RACECOURSE, PRETORIA.

MR DE SANTOS—BETWEEN SHEETS—GOOD FRIDAY—AN EXTRAORDINARY COMMUNICATION — A REGULAR JONAH — GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER SUNDAY—A BATH IN A SENTRY-BOX—AN INTERVIEW WITH MR DE SOUZA—PRIMROSE DAY—MR HELLAWELL—HOW I SMUGGLED MY DIARY.

April 13.—My address is, Racecourse, Pretoria, Z. A. R. I am not a trainer, jockey, or bookmaker, but one of the general British public who willy-nilly visits this racecourse, and is there detained. I arrived on Thursday, 12th April, and under the soothing influence of Mr De Santos soon resigned myself to my position in his tent. Mr De Santos belongs to the Indian Medical Corps, and was one of the first on the scene of operations in Natal under Major Donegan, R.A.M.C. When the

wounded at Dundee were left to their fate, and were taken to Pretoria, Mr De Santos volunteered, and was specially told off from among many others to take charge of the wounded. He is a young man who has now seen his third campaign, and is M.B. of Madras. When he volunteered he fully recognised the difficulty of his coming position, but, confident in his ability and keen for distinction, as all young men should be, he has faced his enforced imprisonment with a heroism which deserves special mention. From the 23rd of October, just six months ago, Mr De Santos has remained faithful to his charge under the officialdom of the Z. A. R. and the direction of the Red Cross Society of Pretoria. To have worked in unison with both these bodies, to have succeeded in getting his own way, gradually it is true, in the sanitary arrangements and comforts so necessary for the welfare of a hospital, and to have gained the esteem of every one concerned, from his orderlies, and the sick he has nursed, to the Boer guard and reigning committee in Pretoria, is an achievement which augurs well for his future career; and I hope the fact that

he has been lost to the world in an enemy's country will not blind the powers that be in London and South Africa to the promotion and decoration he so richly merits. It is only in the sufferings of others that we realise how slight are our own; and surely to be confined within a limited area, to be surrounded by sick and wounded prisoners of war, to be allowed the rarest communication with English-speaking people, and all this for six long months, are trials which, though borne absolutely without complaint by Mr De Santos, border on the word "sufferings" so strongly that I feel how selfish I am when I touch on any of my own.

To turn again to that word "self," darkness came on long before I told Mr De Santos the history of my capture; and after an excellent bit of dinner, considering the frugality of the store, I went to bed between sheets and off the ground, and with a hospital night-gown on! These were indeed luxuries, since I had slept for the past adventurous fortnight on the hard veldt, in the same shirt, socks, boots, coat, and breeches I had been wearing during the day-time.

Next morning was Good Friday. I borrowed a blue hospital suit, and knowing I should have nothing new to put on on Easter Day, a habit I have been brought up to, I determined to get my clothes washed and cleaned. That it *was* Good Friday we were forcibly reminded by the gifts of the kind British residents here, which included two cases of hot cross buns. I wondered if Tommy Atkins's admirable commissariat department in the Free State had remembered him in a similar way. I had a look round my new prison, and then I telephoned to the commissioner of police, who promised that my case would be promptly dealt with.

I shall never believe in my release till I am well over the frontier, the manners and customs of the Boer, like Fabius Cunctator, having thoroughly impregnated my whole system. We have plenty of books; newspapers are disallowed but occasionally smuggled in; and when I have been in the mood I have addressed letters, in my most polished language, to the chief commissioner of police and to the Secretary of State for War, reminding

them that I desire no longer to be an expense to their State.

There are, as I write, about 80 sick and wounded prisoners, 50 of whom are in the medical ward suffering from enteric fever or dysentery, and the remainder are recovering from wounds in the surgical ward. Dr Van der Horst, who is head of the hospital, is a Dutchman, and Mr De Santos speaks well of him; but he only comes round once a day, morning or evening, and the chief work falls, as I have already said, on Mr De Santos. He has about 22 orderlies to assist him, who are only too glad to have work found for them here, rather than pass their days among the 4000 British prisoners at Waterval. These form a regular staff, including quartermaster, cooks, barber, and tailor.

Besides our sick and wounded there are a number of Colonial prisoners, who are kept as far as possible from the regulars, and live in the stables, which is divided up into so many stalls; and again, sheltered by a lean-to, the political prisoners are quartered in the paddock

adjoining the grand stand, under which some of the orderlies live.

A thoroughly exciting incident occurred during my short visit here. One morning one of the civilian prisoners—a Mr Ernest Distin (I believe he is a schoolmaster in the southern part of the Orange Free State)—came along to see the doctor, under the charge of the usual Hollander guard, who listened to every word that was said, and generally showed his officiousness. I was sitting by the doctor's tent when he was called out to see this presumed patient, and as I listened, Mr Distin suddenly seemed to faint and fall into my arms! As he fell over me, and I helped to carry him into the doctor's bed, he whispered hurriedly, "I'm all right. I have something for you to-morrow—important;" and then he recovered as quickly as he had fainted, and I saw that the Hollander guard had noticed nothing. Next day he came back by appointment to see the doctor, and walking up to me he said, "Would you not like a book, Lord Rosslyn?" I thanked him very much, and he

handed me 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'! As he did so, he whispered quickly, "Page 100," and then he was attended to by the doctor, and went away. I wondered at my curious visitor, and immediately opened the book. For a long time I could see nothing, but on looking closely at the page he had mentioned and the one following, I noticed little dots over some of the letters. I guessed that this was a message of some importance, and I immediately set to work to decipher it. The following is how it read:—

"I have it on authentic information that General Cronje buried two big guns and a large quantity of ammunition under the graves of his dead. The guns are in the long grave pointing east and west. Two waggon-loads of ammunition have been buried between Kroonstad and Winburg by burghers. Please communicate from Ernest Distin, Intelligence Department under Captain Lawrence, General French's column."

Little did I imagine that I should read 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' in such peculiar language, or under such extraordinary circumstances!

slaves *enjoying* all this! To this day, I have no patience with the unutterable trash that some of your patronizing northerners have made up, as in their zeal to apologize for our sins. We all know better. Tell me that any man living wants to work all his days, from day-dawn till dark, under the constant eye of a master, without the power of putting forth one irresponsible volition, on the same dreary, monotonous, unchanging toil, and all for two pairs of pantaloons and a pair of shoes a year, with enough food and shelter to keep him in working order! Any man who thinks that human beings can, as a general thing, be made about as comfortable that way as any other, I wish he might try it. I'd buy the dog, and work him, with a clear conscience!"

"I always have supposed," said Miss Ophelia, "that you, all of you, approved of these things, and thought them *right*—according to Scripture."

"Humbug! We are not quite reduced to that yet. Alfred, who is as determined a despot as ever walked, does not pretend to this kind of defence; no, he stands high and haughty, on that good old, respectable ground, *the right of the strongest;* and he says, and I think quite sensibly, that the American planter 'is only doing, in another form, what the English aristocracy and capitalists are doing by the lower classes;' that is, I take it, *appropriating* them, body and bone, soul and spirit, to their use and convenience. He defends both—and I think, at least, *consistently*. He says that there can be no high civilization without enslavement of the masses, either nominal or real. There must, he says, be a lower class, given up to physical toil and confined to an animal nature; and a higher one thereby acquires leisure and wealth for a more expanded intelligence and improvement, and becomes the directing soul of the lower. So he reasons, because, as I said, he is born an aristocrat; so I don't believe, because I was born a democrat."

"How in the world can the two things be compared?" said Miss Ophelia. "The English labourer is not sold, traded, parted from his family, whipped!"

"He is as much at the will of his employer as if he were sold to him. The slave-owner can whip his refractory slave to death—the capitalist can starve him to death. As to family security, it is hard to say which is the worst—to have one's children sold, or see them starve to death at home."

"But it's no kind of apology for slavery, to prove that it isn't worse than some other bad thing."

"I didn't give it for one—nay, I'll say, besides, that ours is the more bold and palpable infringement of human rights. Actually buying a man up, like a horse—looking at his teeth, *clicking his joints, and trying his paces,* and then paying down for him—having speculators, breeders, traders, and brokers in human bodies and souls—sets the thing before the eyes of the civilized world in a more tangible form, though the thing done be, after all, in its nature, the same; that is, appropriating one set of human beings to the use and improvement of another, without any regard to their own."

"I never thought of the matter in this light," said Miss Ophelia.

"Well, I've travelled in England some, and I've looked over a good many documents as to the state of their lower classes; and I really think there is no denying Alfred, when he says that his slaves are better off than a large class of the population of England. You see, you must not infer from what I have told you that Alfred is what is called a hard master, for he isn't. He is despotic, and unmerciful to insubordination; he would shoot a fellow down with as little remorse as he would shoot a buck, if he opposed him. But in general, he takes a sort of pride in having his slaves comfortably fed and accommodated.

"When I was with him, I insisted that he should do something for their instruction; and, to please me, he did get a chaplain, and used to have them catechized Sunday, though I believe, in his heart, that he thought it would do about as much good to set a chaplain over his dogs and horses. And the fact is, that a mind stupefied and animalized by every bad influence from the hour of birth, spending the whole of every week-day in unreflecting toil, cannot be done much with by a few hours on Sunday. The teachers of Sunday-schools among the manufacturing population of England, and among plantation-hands in our country, could perhaps testify to the same result, *there* and *here*. Yet some striking exceptions there are among us, from the fact that the negro is naturally more impressible to religious sentiment than the white."

"Well," said Miss Ophelia, "how came you to give up your plantation life?"

"Well, we jogged on together some time, till Alfred saw plainly that I was no planter. He thought it absurd, after he had reformed, and altered, and improved everywhere, to suit my notions, that I still remained unsatisfied. The fact was, it was, after all, the THING that I hated—the using these men and women, the perpetuation of all this ignorance, brutality, and vice—just to make money for me!

"Besides I was always interfering in the details. Being myself one of the laziest of mortals, I had altogether too much fellow-feeling for the lazy; and when poor, shiftless dogs put stones at the bottom of their cotton-baskets to make them weigh heavier, or filled their sacks with dirt, with cotton at the top, it seemed so exactly like what I should do if I were they, I couldn't and wouldn't have them flogged for it. Well of course, these

out an end of plantation discipline; and Alf and I came to about the same point that I and my respected father did, years before. So he told me that I was a womanish sentimentalist, and would never do for business life; and advised me to take the bank-stock and the New Orleans family mansion, and go to writing poetry, and let him manage the plantation. So we parted, and I came here."

"But why didn't you free your slaves?"

"Well, I wasn't up to that. To hold them as tools for money-making, I could not; have them to help spend money, you know, didn't look quite so ugly to me. Some of them were old house-servants, to whom I was much attached; and the younger ones were children to the old. All were well satisfied to be as they were." He paused, and walked reflectively up and down the room.

"There was," said St. Clare, "a time in my life when I had plans and hopes of doing something in this world, more than to float and drift. I had vague, indistinct yearnings to be a sort of emancipator—to free my native land from this spot and stain. All young men have had such fever-fits, I suppose, some time—but then—"

"Why didn't you?" said Miss Ophelia; "you ought not to put your hand to the plough, and look back."

"Oh, well, things didn't go with me as I expected, and I got the despair of living that Solomon did. I suppose it was a necessary incident to wisdom in us both; but, somehow or other, instead of being actor and regenerator in society, I became a piece of drift-wood, and have been floating and eddying about ever since. Alfred scolds me every time we meet, and he has the better of me, I grant; for he really does something. His life is a logical result of his opinions, and mine is a contemptible *non sequitur*."

"My dear cousin, can you be satisfied with such a way of spending your probation?"

"Satisfied! Was I not just telling you I despised it? But, then, to come back to this point—we were on this liberation business. I don't think my feelings about slavery are peculiar. I find many men who, in their hearts, think of it just as I do. The land groans under it; and, bad as it is for the slave, it is worse, if anything, for the master. It takes no spectacles to see that a great class of vicious, improvident, degraded people, among us, are an evil to us as well as to themselves. The capitalist and aristocrat of England cannot feel that as we do, because they do not mingle with the class they degrade as we do. They are in our houses; they are the associates of our children, and they form their minds faster than we can; for they are a race that children always will cling to and assimilate with. If Eva, now, was not more angel than ordinary, she would be ruined. We might as well allow the small-pox to run among them, and think our children would not take it, as to let them be uninstructed and vicious, and think our children will not be affected by that. Yet our laws positively and utterly forbid any efficient general educational system, and they do it wisely, too; for just begin and thoroughly educate one generation, and the whole thing would be blown sky-high. If we did not give them liberty they would take it."

"And what do you think will be the end of this?" said Miss Ophelia.

"I don't know. One thing is certain—that there is a mustering among the masses, the world over; and there is a *dies iræ* coming on, sooner or later. The same thing is working in Europe, in England, and in this country. My mother used to tell me of a millennium that was coming, when Christ should reign, and all men should be free and happy. And she taught me, when I was a boy, to pray, 'Thy kingdom come.' Sometimes I think all this sighing, and groaning, and stirring among the dry bones foretells what she used to tell me was coming. But who may abide the day of His appearing?"

"Augustine, sometimes I think you are not far from the kingdom," said Miss Ophelia, laying down her knitting, and looking anxiously at her cousin.

"Thank you for your good opinion; but it's up and down with me—up to heaven's gate in theory, down in earth's dust in practice. But there's the tea-bell—do let's go—and don't say, now, I haven't had one downright serious talk for once in my life."

At table, Marie alluded to the incident of Prue. "I suppose you'll think, cousin," she said, "that we are all barbarians."

"I think that's a barbarous thing," said Miss Ophelia, "but I don't think you are all barbarians."

"Well, now," said Marie, "I know it's impossible to get along with some of these creatures. They are so bad they ought not to live. I don't feel a particle of sympathy for such cases. If they'd only behave themselves, it would not happen."

"But, mamma," said Eva, "the poor creature was unhappy; that's what made her drink."

"Oh, fiddlestick! as if that was any excuse! I'm unhappy, very often, I presume," she said, pensively, "that I've had greater trials than ever she had. It's just because they are so bad. There's some of them that you cannot break in by any kind of severity. I remember father had a man that was so lazy he would run away just to get rid of work, and lie round in the swamps, stealing and doing all sorts of horrid things. That man was caught and whipped, time and again, and it never did him any good; and the last time he crawled off, though he couldn't but just go, and died in the swamp. There was no sort of reason for it, for father's hands were always treated kindly."

At this point it will be interesting to record that, having been transferred to the officers' quarters, I found an officer I knew—Mr Tristram, of the 12th Lancers—who had a private code home to his friends. He transmitted the text so successfully that on Lord Roberts's entry into Pretoria I was informed by Tristram that he had received a letter saying the message had reached home, had been telegraphed out to Lord Roberts, and that it was believed both the guns had been discovered!

I reproduce as an interesting illustration the identical pages of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' which were marked by Mr Distin, and which I tore out of the book and kept as a curiosity.

It spoke well for the cleanliness of the place (though there was still room for improvement) that there had only been one case of enteric fever contracted here. All the others were men who had been brought from Waterval, and I fear there were a good many cases of fever up there, which seemed to be on the increase, and might prove difficult to contend with. I was told there had been thirty-three deaths at Waterval and eleven here, and am sorry to

say that three of these latter occurred since I came, so I felt like a regular Jonah! The first man was a Private Cole of the Gloucesters—he died on Good Friday; next night a New Zealander named Tarrant passed away; and on Easter Sunday Gunner Edwards of the Royal Horse Artillery succumbed. The doctor held a post-mortem on each, and I was privileged to see one of these, and learnt the condition of the intestine which causes death. The men were allowed to send about a dozen representatives to the funeral, which was conducted by Mr Godfrey, of the English Church, and they invariably made a pretty little wreath for their dead comrade's grave.

To find amusement, rounders and cricket were occasionally indulged in, but the space was limited over which the men could take exercise. I believe this will, however, be rectified, and the full run of the racecourse allowed—a privilege I have been given, and in consequence of which I have made representations to Mr Melt Marais, the field cornet of Pretoria, who is one of the committee which deals with these matters.

I have been allowed to buy what I want, and would here testify to the courtesy extended to me, though I am not in love with the corporals who rule in the absence of the commandant, and who are apt to be too officious, sometimes interfering, and at others fawning. But this is the way of every country, especially among the uneducated. I held a short service in the surgical ward on Easter Sunday, which seemed well attended and appreciated, but was amused at having to give my parole to one of the Hollander corporals that I was not going to stir up a rebellion!

The bath was a masterpiece of engineering. The framework was originally a long coop for fowls, exhibited at the Agricultural Show, but now it is on end, and looks like a big sentry-box. The tap is outside, and connected in the sentry-box with a perforated tin, and it makes a deliciously cold shower every morning, which I revel in about seven o'clock. Breakfast at eight consisted of porridge and some tinned meat or stewed mutton or eggs, with bread and butter, but the plates and food were invariably cold, though the kitchen was only a

yard distant. This we washed down with tea, coffee, or cocoa in pannikins. At lunch we had stewed bits of meat, with a cup of soup made from the stew, and some jam; and at night it was a toss up if there was anything beside tinned herrings and tea. But I was quite happy on this diet, though, as Mr Hellawell, another 'Daily Mail' correspondent, is coming here from Waterval, we shall probably start a better mess *à trois*.

On Easter Monday we had visitors. Mr Godfrey came for a few minutes, a privilege he said he was unable to obtain too frequently except at the request of the dying; and while he was here Mr Louis de Souza, the secretary to the Minister for War, and a member of the committee in charge of prisoners, paid us a visit, and stayed some time; so I was able to have a long chat with him, and told him my story, and hoped he would not detain me here much longer. He seemed extremely nice, and spoke to me on many subjects, but as one of five I do not know what weight his voice will carry in favour of release. "You would have been sent away at once," he said, "had

not President Steyn telegraphed to detain you till he knew what Lord Roberts intended to do with the landrosts he had taken." So this was the reason why I was not a free man! "If I were Lord Roberts's brother," I rejoined, "I do not think he would negotiate for my exchange, as I am a private individual, and have nothing to do with either military or civil government, which your landrosts have." He invited me to write my full case, which he promised to forward to President Steyn. Mr De Souza spoke with great feeling of the late General Joubert, whose secretary he had been. "He died with the name of his people on his lips;" but he added, "I believe if he had exerted himself, this war might have been averted. He dreaded it, and was strongly opposed to hostilities." "When do you think the war will end?" I asked. "It is impossible to say," was his reply. "At one time I thought it would be over in a few weeks; now it may last for months." I asked him if, when I was released, I could pay my respects to President Kruger. "He knew my sister," I added, "when she was here some years ago." "I will

inquire," was the courteous reply. "I too remember your sister's visit; she came from Johannesburg." "That reminds me," I broke in, "she was the guest of Mr J. B. Robinson. Is he looked upon with favour by your people?" "Not now," came the decided answer. "He has received concession after concession from the President, but you know all the thanks he has returned for them!" Mr De Souza told me, in answer to a question, that he was very interested in the hospital arrangements, and sorry at the plight of our men. "What do you think about St Helena for your prisoners?" I asked him, and Mr De Souza did not seem dissatisfied with the British arrangements,—"But," he added, "I would like to see an exchange. I am afraid, however, it is impossible, as our Government has urged it in vain on several occasions."

On the grounds of humanity I agreed with him. "But consider the effect," I added. "We have many more prisoners than you, and we can double our force out here if need be. What I do deplore is to see these sick and wounded detained, and no doubt you feel

the same. If I urged such an exchange through the paper I represent, would you accept it?" "Yes," he said, "certainly the Government would consider it." "And then," I added, "suppose an exchange of all prisoners were accepted on 'parole' that they did not fight again, would there not be an insuperable difficulty in giving this parole on your side, when your men would return to their own homes in the midst of the fighting? Our own, of course, could be sent to England." Mr De Souza saw the difficulty, but on the grounds of humanity and in view of increasing sickness I hoped her Majesty's advisers would assent to some sort of exchange. Mr De Souza left me after telling me that Winston Churchill's warrant of release was in their hands the night he escaped, and that they were glad to be rid of him. "He talked *so much*," he added, "that we all avoided him"! I could not restrain a smile; but his escape and Mr Hellawell's unsuccessful attempt have certainly made matters "difficult" for war correspondents and officers too, since these have been removed to more guarded quarters

ever since three of their number escaped about a month ago.

Mr De Souza left me after promising to do his best, and so I passed quite a cheery half hour. His father was Portuguese and his mother Dutch.

April 19.—Primrose Day and no primroses. Yesterday passed uneventfully though hopefully, as I was again informed that my case would be gone into "to-morrow." It is always "to-morrow" in Pretoria.

Mr Hellawell came down on Tuesday from Waterval, to which place he had been transferred after his attempt to escape. He was suffering from malaria, but talked as much as Winston Churchill, so I did not lack news of how he was caught and the part he had played. He represents the 'Cape Times' and 'Daily Mail,' and was at Mafeking, but his capture dates from Nov. 16, so his newspapers and himself have been unfortunate, though I should think his experiences would prove interesting reading at a later date. As I expected, we at once began to improve our mess, but I am not destined to share it long,

as I have to-day received news of a change of quarters. Mr Melt Marais, the field cornet, called and told me the committee were going to discuss my case this morning; but he had hardly gone before a message came that I was to go to the officers' quarters. I knew that this could be no result of the committee's deliberations, so I said I would wait to hear their decision before I changed my living-place.

Unfortunately the committee have given me no information as to the probable length of my detention, but have sent an order for my removal to the other officers' quarters. I don't think this omens well, but I hope for the best, and rely on fair-play. I am sorry to leave Mr De Santos, but glad to join many friends, though a sight into the unknown is always dangerous after you have made yourself fairly comfortable for a week. So to-night I pack up both my valise and my spirits, neither of which will occupy a very long time. I am seedy and depressed, and my hopes, raised at first, of an immediate release, are rudely dashed to the ground. Nor have I yet dis-

covered the real cause. Perhaps I shall when I get to my new prison. There seems to be no war news, though one eccentric thought he heard heavy guns to the south-west of Pretoria! Poor fellow!—imprisonment tells on all of us.

There should at least be some attraction in this chapter and the next from the fact that they were smuggled through to England by means of Mr Hofmeyr, who was released on May 12. As the story of how it was done may not be uninteresting to my readers, I will tell it now. When a prisoner of war is to be released he is only notified of his removal half an hour before the train goes, and then the commandant and one or two other guards stand over him to see that he takes nothing but his personal belongings. Even these, especially books and manuscripts, are rigidly searched. Mr Hofmeyr was an instance. He had almost finished packing when I heard the news, and found him surrounded by a crowd of friends to whom he was doling out little keepsakes. To serve my paper was my one motive. I ran to my *jagah*,

procured an empty biscuit tin, folded this and the subsequent chapter to fit the bottom, then rushed off to the store and bought a full tin of biscuits. These I unpacked and repacked in the almost empty tin as carefully as possible. I then walked up to Hofmeyr with the tin open showing the biscuits, and, before the guards, asked him openly to accept these biscuits, as he was sure to be hungry on his long journey. To my dismay Hofmeyr, who knew nothing of my scheme, politely refused my offering with thanks. However, I pressed him to do so, if only as a token of goodwill from a friend. He took it, and I then asked the guard to tie the tin up with a bit of string I had with me. That worthy acquiesced, and all seemed going well. My difficulty now was to tell Hofmeyr of the contents of the tin, so closely was he guarded. A minute later I whispered hurriedly to him, "Look at the bottom of the box"; and to my horror a guard was at his elbow. My fears were in no way allayed when on his passing through the wire fence the guard who was carrying the "biscuits" touched the box as he spoke to the com-

mandant. What he said I have no idea, but at that moment Hofmeyr asked for it, and it was given him, and I now know it reached the 'Daily Mail' safely. I also put a match-box full of telegrams into the toe of his slipper, to be sent from Lorenço Marques. Whether these went I am uncertain, but Mr Hofmeyr's slippers are surely not so large that he did not feel the box!

CHAPTER XIX.

IN THE BRITISH OFFICERS' PRISON, DASPORT, PRETORIA.

A CHANGE OF QUARTERS—A GLIMPSE OF KRUGER—INSIDE THE "BIRDCAGE"—OUR DAILY LIFE—AN INGENIOUS ROULETTE-TABLE — THE AMERICAN CONSUL — MY SECOND SUNDAY IN PRETORIA—THE REV. ADRIAN HOFMEYR—CRICKET UNDER DIFFICULTIES—WE START A MAGAZINE—SOME STATISTICS —PRISON CLOTHES—FOUR-FOOTED COMPANIONS.

April 21. — The guard and carriage I asked for were sent to fetch me away from the racecourse about midday yesterday, and having said good-bye to Mr De Santos and Mr Hellawell, I shook hands with the commandant, after taking a photograph of him. If Pretoria cannot boast of its main thoroughfares, it can at anyrate claim to being an ideal situation for a town. My road home through two or three streets wh—

apparently intersect one another at right angles, and along each were rows of low, but neat, villas or bungalows, with an occasional church spire or imposing building to relieve the monotony. High evergreens, blue gums, and tall willows shade the inhabitants from the heat of the noonday sun; and a little river, now only a stream, seemed to form the northern boundary of the town. I passed close to where President Kruger was sitting on the stoep of his humble home, which faces his own private place of worship, and, crossing the river, soon got a glimpse of the "birdcage," as I have since christened it, which held our British officers as prisoners of war. I was driven to a building outside this "cage," next to which were lined a row of white tents, evidently tenanted by the guards, and there introduced to my new commandant, Westernink by name, who, with two other imperious assistants, requested me to empty my pockets of their contents. With a forward movement one of them made as if to search and feel me thoroughly, but I was in no mood for this performance, and protested that I had come from the racecourse, where I had

been a week. At the same time I showed my watch, handkerchief, tobacco pouch and pipe, all of which I was allowed to retain. "Your money, please." Again I objected, but I was promised a receipt, a form of discharge I had as much respect for at that moment as I had for the Boer official promise. "Take off your camera." This was more than I could bear, but it had to go, and then I asked that my valise might be examined in my presence. This was agreed to. What a search they made, these officious officials! And yet they *did* miss something, much to my relief and amusement —something in the shape of this and the previous chapter and letters from men to officers! Although it was nothing of any great importance they overlooked, I preferred to make certain of its safe custody after my previous experience, so what appeared superficially like a biscuit tin full of tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes, was allowed to remain as part of my personal property. The lining of my overcoat, which I had had carefully sewn up a few hours previously, owing to its ragged condition, curiously enough contained a Dutch

illustrated paper and some old 'Standard and Diggers' News'—at least so I found when the gentleman in question ripped it open! The papers in this establishment were evidently not contraband of war, and were replaced in the lining! The valise was then rolled up again, and I was escorted to the entrance of the cage, formed of double gates about 8 feet wide and 5 feet high, with nails pointing uppermost stuck into the top. On the other side of this gate, and surrounding an area of about 200 by 100 yards, was a laced and interlaced 4-feet-wide wire entanglement, and inside this a 10-feet-high wire-netting; so, as I was pushed inside, I realised that escape was practically impossible, and almost wished myself back at the race-course. I was at once the centre of a small knot of bearded, curiously dressed human beings, and but for a babel of questions in the English tongue, I think I might have been forgiven had I mistaken them for Boers.

But Spencer, whom I had parted with at the station, relieved me from any doubt as to whether I should hold my tongue or not, and M'Whinnie soon came out to hear where I had

THE BIRDCAGE, BRITISH OFFICERS' PRISON, PRETORIA.

THE AMERICAN CONSUL IN PRETORIA,
MR ADALBERT HAY.

been since I left him last week. I went with him to inspect my new quarters in a huge tin building in the centre of this "birdcage." I found it divided into three partitions, the one from where I entered being about 100 yards long by 20 broad, with four long rows of beds about 3 feet apart, and near me five cold-water bath-rooms.

As I walked through to where every one was moving, in answer to a tinkling bell, I met Ricardo of the Blues, Tristram of the 12th Lancers, Charlie Grenfell, late of the 10th Hussars, and Ansell of the Inniskilling Dragoons, who used to hunt with me in Fife in the good old days. These were the only men I knew as I looked round the dining-room, where we sat on wooden benches at four long tables, if I except the unfortunate officers who were taken with me near Reddersburg. Beyond the dining-room were the kitchen and a kind of store and office combined, to which I was subsequently introduced to get anything I might want for my personal comfort. Lieut. Grimshaw, Dublin Fusiliers, and Lieut. Smith, Gloucester Regiment, have undertaken the

commissariat department for us, and a busy time they must have had, judging from the crowded room and the number of orders taken down.

After lunch, which, if meagre, consisted of an excellent piece of roast beef and some bread and jam, which we washed down with water or lime-juice, as whisky and wine were not allowed, I found a place to pitch my bed, which had been supplied to me; and after talking the whole afternoon till my tongue refused to articulate any longer, we went to dinner at 7.30. This meal, like lunch, did not occupy many minutes — a little soup, some roast mutton, and bread and jam, forming the simple bill of fare; but I found the tables divided into little messes, each one having its own sub-mess-president, who catered for all the additional luxuries we might require. The mess to which I have been attached, as there was a vacant place at it the day I arrived, consists of Captain M'Whinnie, Royal Irish Rifles, Lieut. Ansell, Inniskilling Dragoons, Lieut. Duhan, Kitchener's Horse, Lieut. Metge, Welsh Regiment, and

Captain Vaughan, Kitchener's Horse. Dunhan and Vaughan are both retired officers.

The tables were hardly cleared of the necessary impedimenta by the "bâtmen," thirty-two of whom have so far been allowed, when cards, dominoes, and chess-boards took their place, and at the farther table a red cloth of some dimensions, with a covered bottle in the centre, soon attracted my curiosity.

I found the most cleverly and ingeniously devised roulette-table I had ever seen. In place of a disc, a ball, and little numbered cavities, was a circle of cards composed of an ordinary whist pack without court cards, but with a "joker" as "zero"! The bottle I had noticed was used as a pivot in the centre for turning an indicator, while on either side of this centreboard were similar whist packs arranged in four columns, with "Pair" and "Impair," "Manque" and "Passe" and "Rouge et Noir" marked out in squares like those at Monte Carlo. You could back hearts, clubs, diamonds, or spades, or any of the columns and numbers, and the bank, generally made up of playing shareholders, paid the correct odds

to the punters when they won. Of course the game was in counters, and was kept within the meaning of an "amusement" and not a "gamble," and according as you won or lost the account was entered in the mess bill, which was settled every month. But the counters, from Johannesburg, were very limited, and the game was so popular that at a later date it was decided to issue "five-pound notes." The artist's clever forgery, with the assistance of the hectograph, was so ingenious that I reproduce one of the twenty-seven issued.

At the other tables I saw piquet, cribbage, whist, and poker being played, but bridge and chess were evidently the most popular, and there was one officer who was a marvel at the last game, and could beat three others, playing each their own board, while he himself sat blindfolded.

About ten o'clock the electric light, which is in this building, as well as all round our cage, was switched off, and we lighted our candles and turned into bed. Mine was next to M'Whinnie's, and it was a long time,

owing to my new surroundings, the opening and shutting of doors, and the hum of conversation, before I fell asleep, to dream of the strange fate which had led me to this prison, and of my poor unfortunate comrades in their enforced captivity.

I can't say I slept well. The room was draughty, and if we shut the windows it became stuffy. Moreover, a frog came in and croaked at our misfortunes, but I was asleep when M'Whinnie shook me and laughed at my boast that I should be up at six o'clock. The "bath parade" was rather an amusing sight—which I watched from my bed—some hurrying to beat a comrade in the "turn," others strolling leisurely along, seeming to be indifferent whether they bathed or not, as they smoked their cigarette. It gave me an insight, too, into the night-dress fashion, and what was mostly worn on the feet: prison shoes supplied by the authorities here s[illegible] to prevail; while most people had pyja[illegible] more or less ruddy hue, caused by the stone dust which forms the floor o[illegible] ing. It took a long time to get

there were only five for 140 men; and "waiting their turn" would have made an interesting and amusing snapshot. So the breakfast bell rang, and tinned fish, and Quaker oats, with fresh or condensed milk (according to the supply of the former, which was very limited), were eagerly and quickly swallowed. After breakfast those who had chairs sat out and read, others wrote letters in the dining-room, while many of us, after a quiet cigarette or pipe, set to work on quoits, cricket, and even chess. There are some here, too, who seem to be ever walking—walking like the lions at the Zoo—round and round their cage. Poor devils, what a life! And so another day was added to the long number, and some can already claim to have done "six months' hard." One thing I noticed was that most of the officers, especially the seniors, refrained from mentioning the story of their capture. Perh[illegible] they were sick of telling it, for I am [illegible] one [illegible] who could be ashamed of [illegible]

Some days after I [illegible] American consul. S[illegible]

at last, and I rushed eagerly, almost too eagerly for the guard who escorted me, to the outer building, where I met Mr Adalbert Hay and his vice-consul. "I am afraid they won't let you go," were almost the first words I heard. I think my face must have bespoken my feelings, for Mr Hay added, "But I will do all I can: the matter is not yet closed." I told him all I could, but he said, "I can do very little here, and must get permission for everything." It appears that I have imprisoned myself by my own writing. "Your pen will be your ruin some day," my father once said to me, and his words came ominously to my memory at this moment. "They think you were a galloper to Lord Roberts, and were carrying information," added Mr Hay. I granted that one or two sentences in my diary might have given that impression, but Mr Hay had not been allowed to see it. "Anyway," I said, "you can point out that the diary was written subsequent to my capture, between Kroonstad and Pretoria, was never [redacted]led, and," I added, much to Mr Hay's [redacted] "every writer 'embellishes' to

make his writing readable." "Then, too, the papers say you have a commission in Thorneycroft's." "You can honestly deny that," I added. "If I had a commission I could never have left the regiment. Of course I was 'attached' for the three weeks I was in Natal. I have no reason to deny that." He left me with the promise that I should know my fate definitely in a day or two, and I came back quite decided in my mind that I was here till Pretoria was taken.

Mr Hay is a very young man for the important and difficult position he has been called on to fill. He has a charming manner and a very clever face. His career will probably be interesting to me to follow, especially as I once had the pleasure of meeting his brilliant father when he was America's representative at the Court of St James'.

To console myself, I have been spending money right and left. I have ordered a table, chest of drawers, and a washstand, and, aided by M'Whinnie's bed and my own, shall form a room in the shape of a laager, in the hope that, as everything goes contrariwise in this

world, when it is quite furnished and comfortable I shall be handed my warrant of release! But I don't really expect it. As I was coming in at dusk I noticed a small crowd at the entrance gate, and went inquiringly to discover its cause. It was only an everyday occurrence —the arrival of that famous newspaper the 'Volksstem,' which is allowed in every evening, after being thoroughly searched by the commandant. Needless to say, it brought no news, and its pages were filled with the usual corrupt paragraphs, chiefly of Dutch origin, to blind its readers' eyes to the truth, and to the only possible outcome of the war.

April 22. — There were two deviations on Sunday from the ordinary daily routine of this monotonous life—(1) divine service, and (2) no 'Volksstem.' In the dining-room I had noticed a small harmonium, and at it a man who appeared to be composing, while occasionally he accompanied himself and sang. It appears that the gentleman in question was a Mr Hofmeyr, and that the harmonium had been presented to him by his comrades in prison. I think Mr Hofmeyr is rather a remarkable

person; at anyrate he is gifted, clever, and popular. He is a cousin of the Bond Hofmeyr. He is not a soldier, but one of three non-combatants here; and though he does not look like one, he is a clergyman of the Dutch Reformed Church from Cape Colony. I think his imprisonment is due to spite at his being a Colonial, British in sentiment and Dutch in name and origin, and to the too common fault of his being a platform orator. He was on a holiday for his health in the neighbourhood of Kimberley, and I believe had done nothing worse than advocate a peaceful solution of the war before it broke out, when he was arrested and sent here. The 'Times' will know him well, as he was one of their correspondents, and in his new home he has the distinction of having made himself the snuggest compartment with red baize, pictures from illustrated papers, and a writing-table at which he spends most of his time finishing his book on prison life and the character of the Boer. Moreover, he is identifying himself with some of us in the issue of a ma[illegible] which I am to be the editor: but m[illegible]

period. I stopped to give this brief sketch of Mr Hofmeyr because he is our "parson," and he read the service to-day with great charm, recalling with his somewhat foreign accent a well-known Scotch minister. Moreover, his extempore prayer, extremely beautiful, reminded me rather of "kirk" than church, and the memory of an old home must be sweet to any prisoner in a foreign land. The absence of the 'Volksstem' did not lengthen our day appreciably, as in place of its plausible news we set to work to concoct in our own imaginative minds the doings and undoings of De Wet and Lord Roberts.

Monday and Tuesday are very much like Friday and Saturday, but the barber comes on Tuesdays and Fridays, and we are escorted and remain under guard in a room in the outer building to get our hair cut. Now that I have undergone this very necessary operation, I own to being a fair representative of such an establishment as this is! We had a cricket match on Monday in a very limited space, using a tennis-ball and stick, with two boxes for wickets. The match was between

the North and South sides of the dormitory, and our side (the North), after an amusing game, won by three runs. It is exercise at anyrate, and helps to pass the time. In the afternoon a few of us met to discuss the details of the new magazine, and having found some excellent artists we have decided to run one for "private circulation" only. A typewriter, some hectographs, paper, and various inks have been ordered, and as Editor I have appealed to every one for contributions.

Though I have told you practically all our daily routine I might add a few details which may prove of interest, and help me to pass the time, which already weighs heavily. Our number is now exactly 145, it having been swelled yesterday by the arrival of two "jail birds," Captain Bates, C.P., and Captain Kirkwood, S.A.L.H., who have both been considered so dangerous that the hero of Kuruman and this other officer have suffered the extra indignity of four months in jail. They did not, however, look much the worse for their treatment, but presented an amusing contrast as they were marched in, Captain Bates being a very short,

stout man, and his mate an enormously tall burly figure. The arrival, too, is announced of three of Brabant's Horse, taken just a fortnight ago at Wepener, where the battle seems still raging, and from appearances gives Lord Roberts the chance of the war of "bagging the lot." There are fifty-four regiments represented in this prison, and every branch of the service has supplied an unwilling delegate, if I omit the Imperial Yeomanry, which, however, to judge from the 'Volksstem,' is not to be left in "splendid isolation." There are five colonels, fifteen majors, and thirty captains. The rest are subalterns or magistrates, with Hofmeyr, Charlie Grenfell, and myself, the trio of non-combatants. There are forty-seven who have been prisoners six months, and the last arrivals from the seat of war were the eight officers who came here with me just a fortnight ago, except those five I have just mentioned. I am not sure that even their nearest and dearest relatives would recognise some of them with their beards and odd garments, for by way of comfort the authorities have supplied us all with suits of clothes, not with

the broad-arrow, but according to the latest style *à la costermonger*, with pearl buttons down the sides of the trousers! I have already told you of our chief occupations, but one of the greatest grievances is the absence of nearly all English newspapers. The committee have some idiotic reason for withholding these, and even the letters are months old in most instances. Neither Mr Hofmeyr nor Charlie Grenfell have been allowed a single one. I hope the same will not be my fate—nor does any one know if the letters we write are forwarded. Judging from the telegrams we have asked to be sent, it is probable that letters, if not actually detained, are at least delayed for weeks, as some telegrams handed in to the commandant a fortnight ago have not yet been sent off. So the evils of press censorship are not wholly one-sided! Amongst us we have two or three four-footed friends, a collie dog, a black cur something like a dachshund, and a little terrier pup with a long curly tail. It is reported that a young baboon we have also got took the latter up in its arms to the top of its perch, and evinced much interest in it!

CHAPTER XX.

A CHAPTER OF PROTESTS.

ABOUT WINSTON CHURCHILL AND A CLERGYMAN — ABOUT COLONIAL PRISONERS—ABOUT THE SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS —ABOUT THE GENERAL TREATMENT—ABOUT THE DELIVERY OF LETTERS — ABOUT MASS FOR THE ROMAN CATHOLIC OFFICERS — ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF THE MEN AT WATERVAL—SOME NOTES — OFFICERS' AND MEN'S RATIONS.

I MAY in previous chapters have spoken too personally of my new surroundings, and having had the opportunity of ascertaining the general opinion of the officers here as to their treatment, I jot down now a few notes taken from the letter-book kept by Colonel Hunt as the senior officer, prisoner of war. These letters were all sent at various times, but only one reply was received, and one visit from the committee made, though, as you will see by my notes, the condition of affairs, if not satisfactory in the eyes of the

officers, was certainly ameliorated. Before touching on these letters, I would refer for one moment to a letter received from the Rev. J. H. Godfrey, to whom I have previously alluded. The letter is so extraordinary, and so unlike my ideas of how a clergyman should act under the circumstances, that I append it in full, in the hope that it may meet the notice of the Bishop, who was not then in Pretoria :—

To the British Officers, being Prisoners of War, from Rev. Mr Godfrey.

ST ALBAN'S, PRETORIA, Z. A. R.,
Dec. 15, 1899.

GENTLEMEN,—By the kind courtesy of the Government I have been permitted to hold services for you in connection with the Church of England, which services I have felt it a privilege on my part to conduct. After what has recently occurred—viz., the escape of Mr Churchill from confinement — I exceedingly regret that, in consideration of my duty to the Government, I must discontinue such regular ministrations, as I desire to maintain the honour due to my position. Of course I shall always be glad to minister to you in any emergency with the *special* permission of the authorities, who will, with their usual kindness, duly inform me.—With my best wishes, I am, Gentlemen, yours sincerely, J. H. GODFREY.

Needless to say, no reply was sent to this epistle. This gentleman, I was also told, did not pray for the Queen! On the 15th February a letter signed by the committee of officers to the State Secretary, Pretoria (owing to the death in jail of Lieut. Tarbutt from enteric fever), "requested the Government to reconsider the position of the prisoners of war who were former residents in the Transvaal, and who were then in prison, and to treat them in a similar way as the British officers were treated, seeing that they were not subjects of the Transvaal, but of the Queen."

A month afterwards (the 20th March) a reply was received through the commandant stating that no difference was made between prisoners of war, and that only those were kept in jail who were considered "too dangerous to be detained with the officers or other prisoners of war at Waterval."

NOTE.—*The arrival of Captain Bates, who commanded at Kuruman, which surrendered at the end of* 1899, *and of Captain Kirkwood* (*South African Light Horse*), *who was*

formerly a Johannesburg resident, from jail to this place yesterday, after four months' detention, is sufficient proof of the falseness of the commandant's reply.—R.

In reply, the officers' committee on March 23rd addressed a second letter, *to which they have had no reply*, pointing out that another death had occurred in prison of typhoid—that of a Mr Crewe, a non-combatant civilian—and asking that those "too dangerous to mix with others should be confined in the future under such sanitary conditions as might not endanger their lives."

NOTE.—*We have since learnt that eight prisoners have been sent over the border and twenty to Waterval from jail, probably in deference to this protest.*—R.

On March 16 the officers' committee addressed a protest against the accommodation provided for the officers at the new prison. They stated that "the building was such as was usually provided for cattle; the ventilation was defective; the room for twenty-

seven soldier servants was only 24 feet by 15 feet; the floors were of loose earth, dusty in dry and foul in wet weather; the beds were much too close, and, except the bath-rooms, there was no washing accommodation; the rough fittings, especially in the dining-room, were wholly unsuitable; the latrines were absolutely disgraceful, and were a grave menace to health"; and they concluded by asking the committee of control in Pretoria "to come and see for themselves," and asked "for their removal to more suitable quarters."

NOTE.—*No answer to this. But some of the committee did come up and condemned the building. Most of the complaints are still unattended to, except that about the latrines; and two tents have been supplied for the servants. The room is now considerably more crowded than when this protest was written.*—R.

On March 30 anothe
to the South A
general treatme
missioned officer

submitted that "complaints as a rule received no attention, some being suppressed, others unwarrantably delayed, and in one case a series of protests made never reached the authority to whom they were addressed; the delay which occurred in the receipt and despatch of their correspondence was most unnecessary and annoying; letters were often delayed for weeks after their arrival in Pretoria; communications between themselves and their men at Waterval took two or three weeks, and in one instance five weeks, in transit; approved telegrams to England had been delayed for days or entirely suppressed; letters known to have been sent to officers, and practically all European and Colonial newspapers, had been withheld from them; the shed in which the officers were herded together was quite unfit for the purpose, and that this was pointed out in their letter of 16th, which had not been acknowledged; the place was infested with vermin; the treatment to which the non-commissioned officers and men at Waterval were [illegible] was contributing to the very se[illegible]

prevalent among them; for weeks no soap had been issued to these men; many were understood to be without boots; the scale of diet (½ lb. of meat bi-weekly) was extremely low, and the sanitary conditions most defective; the officers were never informed of the serious illness or death of any of their men, which they had a right to demand."

NOTE.—*In sending this protest the officers' committee contrasted the Transvaal with the British system of treatment of prisoners of war, pointing out that each prisoner in our hands had a full day's rations, including* 1 *lb. of meat per diem, and opportunities of seeing visitors regularly, while every possible difficulty was here placed in the way of those who wished to see even the officers. They also pointed out that among the prisoners there were several whose detention was wholly contrary to the customs of* [illegible] *were lodged* [illegible] *in*[illegible] *e*[illegible] *copy*

would be placed before the British authorities when opportunity offered!

There was a certain amount of humour in the last sentence, but there is little doubt the grievances complained of were real. In the Franco-German war officers had their parole, and I believe the men also, but my intuition into the Boer character has made me grateful for even a roof to my head.—R.

On March 7, Colonel Hunt, the senior officer, addressed another protest to the Executive in charge of British prisoners of war, "on the delay in the delivery of letters."

NOTE.—*A great improvement may certainly be noted in this direction, as only yesterday letters were received from home dated a little over a month ago. There are, however, a large number of letters lost, missing, or detained, as several officers have received others saying that previous ones had been written. As I am on the subject of correspondence, it will interest you to know that on handing in a letter or a telegram one could make certain of its being delayed at least a fortnight, and*

probably a month, before it was handed over to the post or telegraph office! Newspapers came very, very rarely, and we were only allowed the 'Volksstem,' notwithstanding the State attorney's promise to use his influence in getting us the 'Standard and Diggers' News.' The arrival of letters was quite one of the most exciting features of our captivity, but ten or twenty among 140 *is a poor proportion, and many were lucky enough to get three or four at a time out of these, while the 'Daily Graphic' or 'Weekly Times' took weeks getting round the dormitory, and were read word for word, the pictures being eventually cut out to adorn some artistic bed-space.*—R.

Yet another protest was forwarded on behalf of the Roman Catholic officers here, "remonstrating at being compelled to attend mass in the presence of a guard, and asking for permission to see their priest privately or attend the Roman Catholic Church on parole." This was on April 17. On the following day a meeting of officers, representing 100 men

at Waterval, was held, when the following authentic information was announced: (1) Nothing in the way of medical comforts had been supplied by the Transvaal Government to either the racecourse or Waterval hospitals; (2) the accommodation at the latter was entirely inadequate; (3) two doctors, owing to their being of British extraction, were refused their services at the hospital; (4) before any subscriptions were raised privately, two and a half months ago, the sick were without mattresses, bedsteads, or pillows: they lay on the ground, and had only their two blankets; (5) this private subscription had reached £2500, but the expense of providing all necessaries amounted to £700 a-month, and that now things were in a much better condition.

NOTE.—*At the conclusion of the meeting it was decided to send a donation from the officers to this private subscription fund, and the magnificent sum of over* £700 *was almost immediately collected. This must be a heavy drain on many, and it is to be hoped that*

the British authorities or the Red Cross will refund it at a later period. Meanwhile I have suggested that telegrams be sent to the 'Daily Mail' Absent-minded Beggar Fund and the Red Cross, appealing for immediate assistance, especially for clothing for the men.

Except for the latter want, I am glad to say that we have since learnt of a material improvement in the men's treatment at Waterval, and the decrease of sickness and mortality in the hospitals.—R.

I have thought it better to deal fully with the above protests, feeling that some authentic report of the Boer method of treating their prisoners of war should be recorded. There is but small difference between the Boer treatment of a prisoner of war and an ordinary criminal—the only appreciable difference being that money can buy in the case of the former. But against that must be balanced the fact that all goods cannot (or will not) be supplied, and that prices are exorbitant for even our poorly paid men. A small cake some officer ordered cost him 15s.! Just one more ite

The following were the rations supplied to officers and men :—

Officers.

½ lb. of meat daily per officer.
1 lb. of bread.
Sugar, salt, potatoes (supply failed frequently), tea, coffee.

N.B.—There was no sugar between January 15 and March 10, as the Transvaal Government said it was too expensive. The salt was rock salt, and the sugar brown.

Men.

½ lb. of meat per man twice a-week.
½ lb. of potatoes daily.
½ oz. of tea or coffee daily.
1 lb. of bread or biscuit daily.
½ lb. of mealie-meal twice a-week.
Sugar occasionally.
Salt.

N.B. — The bread is often sour; and for weeks there was no tea, and men made it from bread-crumbs!

No. 0 "CHEAPSIDE."

CHAPTER XXI.

CHANCERY HOUSE, PRETORIA.

NO. 0 CHEAPSIDE—FURNISHING MY LAAGER—A RAT INVADES IT—AN INDIGNITY—SOMETHING ABOUT ESCAPES—AN UNWELCOME VISITOR—EVERYDAY LIFE—THE 'VOLKSSTEM'—HAS LORD ROBERTS SUCCEEDED?

May 1.—I told you before that our prison was divided into long rows of beds. One side we call "Rotten Row," and now the other has been christened "Cheapside." My office is No. 0. I don't think it is a bad name for my habitation—at any rate it has been accepted,—and my bed space (infringing, I am afraid, somewhat too much on that of my neighbour) is now known by that address. By dint of extravagant expenditure (some £10 or £12) I have surrounded my room with re[d] baize—about 12 yards it took—and I ha[ve]

got M'Whinnie to move his bed inside the enclosure, thus giving us a space of about 12 feet by 7 in which we sleep and I write. I have got a table and a chest of drawers. The latter, as you may imagine, is not for my clothes, as I have none worth mentioning, but it keeps everything from the red dust of the floor, especially the "copy" for the new magazine, with which I am flooded.

When I "built" my room I decided to paper the baize, as Mr Hofmeyr had done, with illustrations from the picture papers, but my example was soon followed, and it has been a difficult business to secure cuttings of interest from the 'Sketch' of two and three and even four years ago, which some kind individual sent us. One wall is, however, finished, and over my table and little washstand next to it are photos from the one 'Sphere' I got from Colonel Moller and others from the 'Sketch.' The army is well represented by Lords Roberts and Kitchener, and many other minor "big bugs" whom I know. The stage, too, occupies a large space—Miss Julia Neilson, Miss Violet and Miss Irene Vanbrugh (with whom I am re-

minded of Trelawny of the Wells), Miss Maud Jeffries, whom I have honoured with a frame of light blue tape (originally round a packet of chocolate), Miss Evelyn Millard, and Miss Dorothea Baird; while the Queen surmounts them all, and is surrounded by many of her most distinguished ministers and governors. On either side are the headings 'Sphere' and 'Daily Mail,' in whose interests I am now an unjustly detained and probably long-forgotten prisoner. Last night a rat did me the honour of searching my laager, probably for the paste (made of flour) which holds the pictures to the wall, and then walked over me. The brute effectually put an end to any sleep I was trying to get, as I shivered with cold under my thin covering. This dormitory is like a vault at night, and damp too, as we are on the bare earth, and the frogs, snakes, and insects, of which I am bringing home a fine collection, formed an excellent topic for a natural history debate.

We have really entered the winter season, but the climate is splendid, though the nights are so cold and damp that it requires at least

four blankets to keep me warm. This May-day we have been subjected to one of many indignities. A number of the guard, armed with revolvers and batons, under the superintendence of the commandant, searched the building. Our bedding and clothes, and even the oil-cloth mats, were turned up, and there is apparently a rumour prevalent in Pretoria that we are being supplied with arms, and intend trying to overpower our guard! A more nonsensical canard was never invented. It is a practical impossibility to escape from this cage-work of wire, surrounded as it is by armed guards, though there was a determined but futile attempt made just before I arrived, and before the 10-feet-high wire-netting was put inside the wire entanglement, a description of which I have already given you. It appears that a plan had been arranged whereby the electric wires (which run through this building in the roof) were to be cut, and a rush made in the darkness for the fence. Everything was ready, supplies done up in parcels, and two officers (adepts in electricity) had succeeded in extinguishing the lights, at

the expense of burnt fingers. The rush had been made for the fence by those who intended going, when a warning was heard, and was followed by a volley from the guards. It was a case of sneaking back to the building again, and darkness alone prevented any loss of life, though several bullets are *said* to have come through the building. Hence these extra precautions! I don't think either the commandant or the guards can be blamed for their subsequent severe treatment of us all, and we have only ourselves to find fault with for countenancing these really absurd and impossible attempts at escape.

Talking of escapes, the story of Winston Churchill's was already known to me through his own description, and the officers were most interested to hear about it, though, I am afraid, he was not a *persona grata* with his fellow-prisoners, and, as far as I could ascertain, did not play quite fairly with the others who concocted the plot, but, according to them, followed the principle of *sauve qui peut* rather than "shoulder to shoulder."

The subsequent escape of the other officers

from the Staats Model School was so ingenious and thrilling, that it will almost bear a very short description. The three officers were Captain Haldane, Lieut. Le Mesurier, and Sergeant Brockie. When they heard that the British officers were to be removed to other quarters, these three set to work to hide themselves under the floor of their prison. A fourth officer, Lieut. Frankland, gave them every assistance in the way of supplying them with the necessaries of life, and so well was the secret kept that I do not believe there was one officer in the prison who did not think that they had really escaped. Their quarters were searched by the commandant and his guard ineffectually, but to the dismay of the underground officers the removal of their above-ground comrades was delayed for over a fortnight! All this time the would-be runaways were lying "doggo"! What such a captivity in such a confined space must have meant you will all realise! The day of removal came at last, and by this time any chance of catching the fugitives must have departed from the minds of the Transvaal

authorities. The result was that the Staats Model School was left untenanted and unguarded, and in the quiet of the night these three splendid fellows, who had originally planned the Winston Churchill escape, found themselves outside Pretoria. Their subsequent journey has, of course, been already graphically described by Captain Haldane in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for August and September, and is well worth reading.

We had a visitor to-day. Who do you think the visitor was? None other than Richard Harding Davis, the American novelist. Not only had he reached Pretoria (I saw him last at Ladysmith), not only had he obtained a pass to visit our prison, not only had he got the indecency to do so without inquiring for any individual, but he insulted us by refusing to answer any questions, cracking up the Boers under our noses and those of the guards who accompanied him, and telling us plainly that in conversation with Melt Marais, the field cornet of Pretoria, he had agreed that I was rightly detained as a combatant officer! And yet this is a man whom my family, and I

myself, delighted to honour in our own country when he first came over. I hope he feels like the Pharisee, and thanks God that he is not like other American men are!. Now I know why I am here: it was my diary first, and now it is Richard Harding Davis's untruthful information that I held a commission in Thorneycroft's Horse at the time of my capture. I don't think Mr Davis had better come here any more during his visit to Pretoria.

Day after day follows monotonously. There is a chess tournament in progress, disclosing some great ability in the game, though Lieut. Duhan of Kitchener's Horse is *facile princeps*. The roulette-table forms a comparatively harmless exchange of counters each night; and two boxes and sticks and a tennis-ball give twenty-two of us a daily game of cricket and its attendant exercise. In another place four commanding officers play their quoits; and indoors and out are to be seen men drawing, caricaturing, and painting, while the staff of the new magazine struggle manfully against almost overwhelming difficulties

to produce the first number. Will we ever be free? Assuredly, but when?

"Are there any lies to-day?" is almost invariably the first question in the morning; and since I have been here the 'Volksstem' has been no sooner bought than it is thrown away with the same old story in it: "Our losses are 1 killed and 1 wounded. Our brave burghers are full of courage. By the grace of God the wounded man is nearly well again!" From what I can glean Lord Roberts has had his great chance at Wepener. Has he succeeded? The line of country from Ladybrand to Bloemfontein (*vid* Thaba Nchu and Sannah's Post) should be in our possession and strongly held. The Caledon river forms an eastern boundary which the Boers will never have dared to cross for fear of the Basutos. Where, then, is De Wet? Where are Limmer, Grobler, and their commandos who were surrounding Wepener and holding Dewetsdorf? They ought to be at St Helena by this time! Perhaps they are! How we long for news! How sick we are of the 'Volksstem'!

CHAPTER XXII.

OCCUPATION AND EXPECTATION—THE 'GRAM.'

MONOTONY—HOW IT WAS AVOIDED—OUR STRANGE DRESS—AN EXPLANATION—A CURIOUS FEELING—A LARGE DEMAND—KOPJE-RIGHT.

May 17.—It is sixteen days since I last touched upon my daily life — sixteen days which to many have seemed like sixteen years, but to me like sixteen minutes, so great and strong a master is *Occupation.* In a birdcage, whose perimeter is just 600 yards, nigh upon 150 of her Majesty's subjects, chiefly British officers, are living on the word *Expectation*, and daily searching a southern and western horizon (the other sides being closely guarded by small kopjes) for any sign or change which may indicate the approaching day of their release. From morning until night those who know not

how to obtain *Occupation* and those who fruitlessly strive to get it live only on *Expectation*, now fanning it into an unnecessary flame if any news, be it reliable or untrustworthy, is brought surreptitiously by black or white man, now resigning themselves silently to the advent of another day if the tidings so eagerly looked for are not vouchsafed them.

It is a piteous sight and a really terrible experience this confinement. The stout man grows thin, the thin grows stout. So far so well. But inquire into its cause. It is not the absence of food that makes the stout grow thin, nor its exceptional quality which makes the thin grow stout. It is not the fault of a delicious climate, nor the somewhat restricted area of our exercise-ground; it is not the feeling of degradation which oppresses, but it is Monotony, Monotony, Monotony — monotony which chills the heart, monotony which drives many of us into a state of despondency, monotony which in one case has already resulted in mental aberration, monotony which bids fair to weaken the very strongest in his convictions that it is now only a matter of days before the

war is over, before the *Expectation* we have lived on daily, some for seven long months, is at length fully realised. Yes, there is only one great cure—*Occupation.* Many of us find it—some in a greater, others in a lesser degree; and according to the man's temperament, so does he show himself inwardly and outwardly to his fellow-prisoners. Round me, as I sit writing on a delicious autumn afternoon, shielded from the glare of a hot sun by one of the only two shrubs in the enclosure, I can see a rubber of "bridge" between four of the Royal Irish Rifles; two or three others, like the lions at the Zoo, taking the well-known constitutional "round and round"; some writing, some drawing, and others reading the few books we are allowed from the public library, to which the majority subscribe. A major of the "Fighting Fifth" has built himself a miniature sangar quite out of proportion to his burly frame, which lies protruding from it in pensive indolence; the champion of chess is showing two players how he could win the game with either white or black pieces; and Jacko, the monkey, is chattering his rage, like a spoilt child, to one

of the servants who has put some washing out of his reach, mindful of the day when Jacko was the cause of making him "do double." From the other side of the building comes the pitter-patter of many feet, as the younger and more active join in a heated game of hockey on the hard, red, dusty ground; and indoors the lazy, the unemployed, the disheartened, lie *unoccupied* on their straw mattress, snoring complacently, or staring at the wooden roof as they smoke their pipe or Boer cigarette for want of better *Occupation.* Who can blame them? But in the dining-room—the terra-cotta banqueting-hall, as we have termed the wooden-benched and unfloored shed—a man is playing on the small harmonium music which brings back memories of home; two others are struggling with a magnificent map, fearful in their expectation that Lord Roberts's arrival will thwart the completion of their occupation; and a third (one of the Scottish Rifles) is vieing with Pinero in his attempt to write a second Tanquerayic play.

Curiously costumed are we all. Many, as was natural, arrived kitless from a too distant

reconnaissance! Others, more fortunate (can I use the word?), came "bag and baggage." To all of us have the Transvaal Government supplied a suit of prison apparel, from size "fours" to large "eights,"—from an undertaker's cotton twill to the smartest set of boating flannels. The black soon becomes red, and the white still redder; while the length and breadth of the full-cut trousers soon share the shrinkage of the Stock Market on a day of panic. Ties are rare commodities of dress, and those who don them wear all shapes and colours; while overwear and underwear are as unique in their eccentricity as to remind one of the days when Lady Cardigan startled the racing world on entering the other "Birdcage" at Newmarket. Slouch hats of the tawdriest description, pulled down over the eyes, almost defy the identity of once well-known faces, now covered with hirsute adornments of all shapes and sizes; and the fashion-monger, were he among us searching for "copy," would assuredly predict a quick return to the Dundreary period of the early sixties of the last century.

And why have the last sixteen days since I last wrote passed like so many minutes to me? The answer can only be, *Occupation.* The new Magazine is out! It is called 'The Gram.' Why? I will quote you a sentence from my leading article in doubtful explanation. "To ask such a question is your good luck, for the word will come so familiarly to the eyes and ears of those who made the Staats Model School their dwelling-place, that Major Sturges's selection of the title was accepted *nem. con.*, on the principle that, a little knowledge being a dangerous thing, it was better to accept the word in its entirety rather than inquire too closely into its mysteries." The fact is that at the last prison the officers called any news they got "grams," with a prefix, such as Kaffir-gram, and those of us who were fortunately not there believed the word would be acceptable to the majority. I told you in a previous chapter of the difficulties I was contending with in its production, but on May 12 the hectographs succeeded in producing 62 complete copies. Every l of its 48 pages was written in my own l

writing. It is folio size, and on different kinds and thicknesses of paper. The contributions are really first-rate, and the illustrations show what extraordinary talent we have amongst us. I sent home a copy by Mr Hofmeyr, whom I have already alluded to. He was released on May 12, quite unexpectedly, after just seven months' imprisonment, and we all gave him a tremendous "round" as he left us, for England I believe. He will be much missed, and was deservedly popular. Nature is a curious thing. The genuine pleasure we felt at the departing one's good fortune gave place to a feeling of desperate despondency at being left behind. How selfish! but perhaps it was only natural! and then a few days more and resignation succeeded despondency, and *Occupation* and *Expectation* reigned supreme. The dinner-bell is ringing, and as the meat was impossible at lunch I must go and try again, and will finish this to-morrow. *Au revoir.*

May 18. — I do not know that a few quotations from our new Magazine, the 'Gram,' will not be of interest to you, as

the copy I sent may never reach home, and the number has been limited by "Censor Hektograph." Captain White, R.A., who did a most admirable front cover and several other illustrations, has proved himself no mean poet, as the following lines, describing this place to his mother in "The Letter," will testify:—

"Dear Mother,—In case you're bemoaning my lot,
Or lamenting the cruel fatality
Which has forced me to sample this far-away spot,
And partake of Oom Paul's hospitality,—

I'll endeavour as well as I can to relate
How your gallant Adolphus is faring,
After being entrapped through the harshness of fate,
While out for an innocent airing.

. . . . .

The whole is enclosed by a trifle of wire,[1]
An obstacle scarcely worth mention;
There's no hunting just now, but to flag it I hear
Is the new M. F. H.'s intention.

. . . . . .

The table's so clean; with a cloth we dispense,
Though some sybarites cherish this custom:
The knives are just wiped with a rag—an immense
Gain of time; besides, washing might rust 'em.

[1] Alluding to the fence.

Our water is served in the washing-stand jugs
(We're a total-abstaining society);
We drink it from glasses and tea-cups and mugs,
Of which there's a charming variety."

Owing to the overcrowding in this prison, and inconvenience thereby arising, Lieut. Tristram, 12th Lancers, wrote a letter to the editor suggesting an examination for further applicants for admission! One question was: "State in as few words as possible *why* you were captured?" Another asked: "What do you know of the scheme for converting the cavalry into *dis*mounted infantry and mounting the West Riding regiment?"

Perhaps one of the most amusing features of the paper was the section headed "Night grams by our own special sleep-walker." The "sounds of revelry by night" are quite extraordinary in our dormitory, and the following paragraph may amuse you:—

Thursday night was signalised by a spirited competition between Captain P-ll-k and a frog. The fact that the gallant captain had long been practising for this event enlisted the strong sympathies of his audience, and many were the shouts (of

encouragement, no doubt) which greeted his opening efforts. The result of the contest, which lasted from 11.45 P.M. to 12.30, was unanimously given in favour of Captain P-ll-k.

We have a story in the first number more wonderful than any the 'Wide World Magazine' can produce; an "orfis boy's letter" which would rival that of the "Pink 'Un"; a double acrostic; a chess column and problem; whist hands; a serial story (which, as it was begun by Mr Hofmeyr, will never be finished); personal paragrams *à la* T. P. in 'M. A. P.'; and a fashion article. Natural history is represented by an article on the "Ant Lion" by Lieut. Metge, Welsh Fusiliers, which would do credit to the 'Field'; and last, but by no means least, we have caricatures and cartoons which would tax Phil May's best endeavours to outdo. One of them represents President Kruger at the head of a corps of Transvaal women, and was suggested by a paragraph in the 'Volksstem' whic[illegible] that the women had asked for [illegible] ammunition, and for permission t[illegible] front! The cartoon is headed, "B[illegible]

of Kruger's Reserves!" Another is a caricature of Lieut. Duhan of Kitchener's Horse, in which he is admirably depicted as Mephistopheles. But perhaps the most unique is "Ye Ancient Coat of Arms." It appealed very forcibly to those who had been prisoners in the Staats Model School. On either side stand as "supporters" the commandant and secretary; above, "a lion furious, couchant, bound secure"; the four quarters depict incidents of life there, while below is the motto, "Dum spiro spero." To one of the quarters in explanation are the following words: Arms: Quarterly: 4th—"Three officers escapant, fugitant; commandant rampant searching on roof. Background azure starred proper." This of course is an allusion to the extraordinary escape of Captain Haldane, Lieut. Le Mesurier, and Sergeant-Major Brockie. All the above illustrations are by Lieut. Frankland of the Dublin Fusiliers. He is only twenty, and really very clever.

The 'Gram Almanac,' by Lieut. Wake, 5th Fusiliers, is another splendid drawing of the two prisons we have occupied, and our trans-

portation from one to the other. One of the events recorded in the Almanac is that £705 was collected here for the soldiers at Waterval. The whole paper is 48 pages, and you can understand that I have not lacked *Occupation* in writing it. So many had to go without a copy that I decided to put up a few spare sheets for auction. The result was stupendous. The whole copy only cost 2s. 6d., but 10s. 6d. was bid for 3 pages! and £3, 19s. was realised for about 36 pages, so keen was the desire to possess it! If I can find time I am going to try and do a reprint, but meanwhile am busy with the second number, which is due to appear on the Queen's birthday. The American consul, the Dutch doctor, the commandant, and many English residents, are begging for copies, but it is for "private circulation," and is "Kopje-right"!

Note.—A facsimile reproduction of the whole three numbers of the 'Gram,' the issue of which will be limited, is in course of publication, price £1, 1s., and can be obtained on application to the author of this book, or to the publishers of the reproduction, Messrs Eyre & Spottiswoode.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A DAY OF SENSATION.

THE LAST TEN DAYS—A TELEGRAM—NEIL HAIG—THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY — A VALUABLE MAGAZINE — THE SOUND OF CANNON—GENERAL EXCITEMENT—A VISIT—A GRANT FOR OFFICERS—THE DAY-OF-RELEASE LOTTERY—UNEXPECTED VISITORS — THE BOERS BEG THE OFFICERS' ASSISTANCE—GENUINE NEWS AT LAST — AN EXTRAORDINARY SCENE—I OBTAIN PERMISSION—CHURCH SQUARE IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT — KRUGER AND HIS GOLD DEPART — ARRIVAL AT WATERVAL — THE MEN RECEIVE THE NEWS—A DRAMATIC EPISODE.

Tuesday, May 29. — Still Pretoria, and still prisoners! We have, however, not been so down in our luck that we could not engage in athletic sports, nor so unmindful of our Queen that we could not remember her birthday, nor so lazy that the second number of the 'Gram' could not be produced. So the last ten days have been quite eventful;

and more than this, I got a telegram from London through the American consul, "Is Rosslyn well?" That was all, but few will realise how much we can appreciate the smallest recognition, the slightest consolation, and the shortest message of remembrance in this hateful confinement. It was my first word from home, and I have been a prisoner eight weeks to-morrow.

The sports took place on the 18th, and were a great success. Neil Haig of the Inniskillings —as a bookmaker—with his huge burly frame and long brown beard, was quite one of the central figures. Those who had been taking long and regular exercise were soon able in the races to show their superior stamina over those who had taken none.

The Queen's birthday gave rise to a good deal of controversy on the subject of etiquette, but when the men from Waterval sent a message to their officers asking permission to send a telegram of congratulation to the Queen, the matter was immediately clinched, and a humble and dutiful message forwarded to her Majesty [illegible] us all. On the same day the second num[illegible]

the 'Gram' was successfully produced, after many difficulties. I think it was even a better number than the first; but to show the interest which the paper has aroused, I may mention that one sheet fetched 10s. 6d., although the price of the whole number was only 2s. 6d. Three officers who had luckily drawn copies sold them for £5 a-piece!

"What's that?" "Listen!" We were all standing about outside after breakfast. There was dead silence for a minute or two, and then burst from a hundred throats, "By Jove, it is!" There was no doubt about it this time. We were listening to the dull growl of distant cannon. Our experts told us it could not be more than twenty-five miles distant, and the smiling faces were a decided contrast to our usual downcast and resigned appearance. Yet there was a possibility, if not the probability, that that eagerly looked for day of release might be deferred for a month or six weeks *if* — and rumour was strong on the subject—*if* we were removed to Lydenburg or some other distant up-country resort. I dared scarcely picture the despairing faces I should

see if this occurred, nor foretell the despondency which would succeed our expectation, and dash mercilessly to the ground the hopes we had treasured and so long anticipated: but I must turn from gloomy thoughts to the happier future.

Everything was in an uproar! Preparations for departure were made. Arrangements for the future were discussed. A clump of trees was described as an incoming force, and a cloud of dust suspected as caused by Kruger's departure! In the joy and excitement Jacko's tail was pulled fearlessly and incessantly, and he eventually betook himself over the fence, and surrendered to one of our Hollander guards, though he was subsequently liberated "on parole"!

At midday Mr Adalbert Hay (the American consul), Mr Leigh Wood (manager of the Natal Bank), and Mr Kalt (secretary to the committee), in charge of prisoners of war, turned up at Chancery House. They were immediately closeted in Colonel Hunt's *jagah*. Speculation was rife as to the cause of their visit, and it was not until lunch time that we knew its purport.

They had come to announce the division of the British Government's allowance of £25 for the imprisoned officers, and the Transvaal's assent to its mode of distribution! Just four months after its allocation! But a word of exoneration is due to Mr Leigh Wood, and, I believe, to Louis Botha also, who only took the matter in hand a very short time ago, and soon made good use of their fertile brains and powers of persuasion.

The announcement made, we lunched. All the morning we had fed on the distant reports of big guns, and we consequently ate with reason, and drank with still greater moderation. We had been allowed wine since the Queen's birthday! During the afternoon, a rumour reached us that Johannesburg was ours. One rumour gave place to another. Exaggeration succeeded exaggeration. So we lived for seven hours. The drawer of the 30th May in the "day of release" lottery was sought for, and being the lucky possessor and the least panic-stricken individual, I offered it for £3 (the value of the "sweep" being £76), as I did not believe that to-morrow's setting

sun would see the British occupation of Pretoria! The 'Volksstem,' newsless and scandalous as ever, arrived, and went, as it always does when the editor is writing, to the waste-paper basket, and then the third bell rang—for dinner. Oh yes! we went to dinner, excited certainly, knowing that the end was imminent, but little realising what was in store for us. Colonel Hunt (our senior officer) had barely sat down on his rug (as the seats are hard), when the secretary appeared, and behind him, through chinks in the door, we recognised the two faces we had seen at midday. What had brought the American consul and Mr Leigh Wood up at such an hour? In a moment it flashed on us that something unusual must be occurring to bring our visitors up a second time and at that hour of the night. We were not long in suspense.

A loud cheer went up as Mr Wood (who has done so much for us) sat down at the prison-board, next to the Colonel, and a still [illegible] as Mr Adalbert Hay also joined us. Th[illegible] the usual hubbub of conversation, ti[illegible]

Hunt made a statement. A deadly silence reigned. "I want twenty officers to go to Waterval to-night, to be with their men in case of any unfortunate outbreak, which, I am warned, is not impossible. The officers who go will be on parole." That was all he said. Such a scene followed as baffles description. The officers, under Colonel Carleton, were quickly chosen from the regiments most strongly represented. The news soon leaked out that our "experts" were not wrong, and that our forces were close at hand, and might be in at any moment. We had gone round Johannesburg, or the western column had cut in between; President Kruger, though expressing a wish to die in the streets, had been persuaded to remove his Government to the East (the actual locality and hour of departure being doubtful); and the inhabitants, fearing disorder at Waterval, had been compelled to crave the assistance of British officers! Moreover, it was said that the attorney (Mr Smuts) and Mr De Souza were on their way up. Here was a pretty kettle of fish! and but for there having been a serious side to the matter, the

comedy which was being played might truly have been described as Gilbertian. The silence relapsed into the former hubbub, extra port was sought, and the gathering lingered far longer than the wooden benches and servants were accustomed to, to discuss the turn of events. Colonel Hunt proposed the health of the American consul amidst tremendous cheering, but no one could play the "Star-spangled Banner" on the harmonium! We toasted Leigh Wood, who had done so much for the prisoners. We cheered the commandant, and he "replied in gracious terms"; we sang "God Save the Queen," unmindful of the pain we might be causing our fallen foe, whose representatives were within the four walls; we gave a "Hip! Hip! Hurrah!" for the secretary, which he acknowledged with a bow; and, as a well-known Colonial officer put it to me, we were as hysterical as "little France." Don't be ashamed of it, I beg of you. Freedom and Liberty were what we were fighting for! "Twenty British officers out on parole! and no press representative!" I begged, b[illegible] begged in vain, till Mr De Souza arri[illegible]

hour of departure and sanctioned my going too. It certainly was a night of Boer contrition. I rushed in again, seized two rugs and a pair of boots, left some injunctions about my papers, and, squeezing a few cigarettes and cigars, a pencil and some foolscap, into my pocket, found myself outside again and on parole!

It would be as well to note here that the conditions on which the twenty British officers accepted the Transvaal authorities' invitation to look after their men were, that they should be themselves on parole whilst at Waterval, and that none of the men should be removed. How this was disregarded is told in a subsequent chapter.

Rugs and valises were thrown pell-mell on the 'bus and carriages in waiting, and away we went to the suburban station of Petersberg (where I had first disembarked), to join the special train which was in waiting to convey us to Waterval. Of course the 'bus stuck in the drift at the bottom of the hill—there is always some precursor to a midnight adventure—and some of us had to unload in order to proceed. De Souza had gone first, to show the way

and—to get refreshments! But with a strong electric light, Church Square must have smiled (if it was not irreverent), as I did, to see the procession stop right in the middle of the town, while friend hailed friend, refreshments were procured, traces and couplings mended, and fresh horses inspanned. The few passers-by, who were not "in the know," wondered what the d—l was happening when British officers, khakid and helmeted, were offering themselves as splendid marks for the stray bullets of many an unpaid mercenary from every quarter of the globe. A few panic-stricken inhabitants stopped, stared, and bolted, and in a minute the usually quiet Pretoria was astir with the rumour that the British officers had broken out and taken possession of the town. Then the procession was re-formed, and though one cab lost its way, and the one in which I was seated was stopped by some excited foreigners who threatened to keep us unless we told them why we were trekking, we eventually [illegible] station, and soon [illegible] We passed on our [illegible] train, which was to [illegible]

the movements of certain heavily-laden waggons which were at the same time conveying the last bit of treasure to the railway station.

It was midnight when we reached Waterval. An armed guard of about fifty men allowed us to pass to the commandant's house, where we were received by that Dutch worthy and his secretary, and also by Lieut. Nesbit, who had been a prisoner there since October 13. Surrounded by a crowd of armed burghers, the scene in the dead of night would have attracted the notice of many a painter of sensational incident. The roll was called to see that we were all present, and then the commandant was informed we were on parole, and that the guard which was pressing round on us must be dismissed. This was done, but I afterwards listened to some of the guards discussing the meaning of the word "parole"! After much scratching of their heads, I heard one of them say, "It means we can all go to bed"!—a definition which evidently pleased the majority. Thus, at any rate, they showed their confidence in the British officer's word of honour! When the commandant and the guard

heard the news, it flew like wildfire to the camp, and for fear of any preconcerted plan, Colonel Carleton decided to call up the non-commissioned officers and make them the bearers of the message to the men that their officers were present, that their release was only a matter of hours, and that order should be strictly maintained.

The arrival of our train had certainly not disturbed the inmates of the prison, for within the cage, not 100 yards distant, the silence of sleep reigned supreme; but in a moment the drowsy camp was awake. From a hum of conversation the news gathered strength as it flew from street to street and from corner to corner, till it assumed the proportions of a mighty roar. Cheers went up; the sound of feet could be heard as the men rushed hither and thither in the hope of seeing their officers; and then the noise gradually subsided, till the whole camp seemed to sleep once more. Meanwhile another scene, quite as dramatic, was being enacted in the commandant's house. Whiskies and sodas appeared as if by magic, and Hollander and Britisher, officer and Boer

peasant, prisoner and warder, joined in a universal scene of congratulation, in a mutual expression of esteem and a general glass of Robert Brown's four-crown Scotch whisky. It was a scene which, to the casual observer, must have savoured of the ludicrous, and I wondered if my eyes were deceiving me, and whether quarrels and wars were as easily patched up in other parts of the world. Such was the humour of the situation! At 4 A.M. I went off to Lieut. Nesbit's hut, and, as I fell asleep, I dreamt of what could possibly be in store for me after the experiences of this first thrilling night outside the prison which had confined me for the past eight weeks.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MY LAST DAYS UNDER THE BOER GOVERNMENT.

THROUGH THE MEN'S PRISON AT WATERVAL — LIEUT. NESBIT —A MIRACULOUS TUNNEL — THE HOSPITAL — A DYSART MAN—AN M.P.'S SON—THE "RUST EN ORDE" COMMITTEE — THE FAMOUS TELEGRAM — WAITING FOR ROBERTS —A CURIOUS LUNCHEON-PARTY — MR LEIGH WOOD AS DICTATOR — I OBTAIN MY FREEDOM, WITH PERMISSION TO REMAIN IN PRETORIA — MY LONG-LOST DIARY — IN DANGER OF MY LIFE — RUMOURS OF A REVERSE — THE BOER GUNS GO EASTWARD — A FRENCH REPORTER AS GUARD — LORD CECIL MANNERS — I CABLE TO LONDON AGAIN—LOOTING—DE SOUZA'S BAD CHEQUE—THE LATEST BOER ISSUE AT A DISCOUNT—A GOVERNMENT "BESLUIT" FROM MIDDELBURG — LOUIS BOTHA ANNOUNCES A VICTORY —STRANGE RUMOURS — A MESSENGER FROM THE BRITISH FORCES—THE "RUST EN ORDE" COMMITTEE DISMISSED— LOUIS BOTHA AND CO. ASSUME THE REINS OF OFFICE— I GO UP SECRETLY TO MY OLD PRISON — WARNINGS OF DANGER—THE BRITISH FAIL TO CUT THE WIRES PROPERLY —THEIR CONVERSATION LISTENED TO IN PRETORIA — A WARRANT ISSUED FOR MY ARREST — A LADY SPY — I PRO-

TEST—THE BOER IDEA OF "PAROLE"—SMUTS' HONOUR—AN AMUSING INCIDENT — COLONEL BLAKE — B 136, 5TH DRAGOON GUARDS—HIS PROGNOSTICATION OF THE FUTURE.

May 30.—It would have been unlike me had I not wished to explore every nook and cranny which had played a part in this war. I had seen victory at Picters Hill, and been present at the relief of Ladysmith. I had shared defeat and surrender in the Orange Free State, after a previous capture and escape. I had ridden through Basutoland, and tasted the hospitality of Maseru—the second Mafeking, as I call it. I had seen the Boer prisoners of war at Simonstown, and learnt what it was to be a prisoner myself; and having been confined first at the racecourse and then at Chancery House, it was but natural that I should evince a desire to inquire into the circumstances and treatment of the non-commissioned officers and men at Waterval. I was therefore up at five this morning, and, after a cup of cocoa, I started with Lieut. Nesbit on a round of the camp, escorted by the commandant—De Wacht.

Before I go any further, I would wish to

acknowledge Lieut. Nesbit's kindness and hospitality to me. As already said, he has been a prisoner since October 13, when the armoured train was wrecked at Kraipan, on its return to Mafeking. With fifteen men Lieut. Nesbit fought for six hours against about 1500 Boers, and was twice severely wounded. When he arrived here he preferred to remain with his men at Waterval, rather than occupy the officers' prison — a preference which must be looked on as an act of great self-denial and magnanimity. He is an East London man, and was a member of the Frontier Field Force under Major-General Baden-Powell.

On our tour of inspection we passed through a turnstile, to find the camp quarters divided into four long parallel streets, the "houses" of which were formed by long lean-to galvanised iron sheds, open at one side, and at one time without an article of furniture within them. The men had to lie on the bare ground with the two rugs they were then allowed. As I saw it yesterday, however, nearly all the men had makeshift beds formed of a wooden frame and sacking, but some had

been compelled to use mother earth, owing to the absence of wood and the necessity of making a fire! Poor chaps! they were in a very ragged condition, and their threadbare clothing and pinched, gaunt, dirty faces were soon explained by the condition of the camp. They had had no meat since the 26th, but Mr Wood had just sent up four bullocks (not a great meal for 4000). Still, they were in high spirits over the good news, and I think would have lived on air had necessity arisen till the British arrived. The streets were all named—at least I saw one called Gloucester Street, which I supposed was an indication of where the Gloucesters lived. The water-supply was good and sufficient, though the latrines were anything but conducive to proper health. In another field to which they had access was a pond through which fresh water ran continuously, thus affording the men, who made it, every opportunity for cleanliness, and the field itself has been the scene of many a cricket match and game of football. Round the whole was a barbed-wire entanglement, similar to that at Chancery House (though without the

inner netting); but notwithstanding this, and the fact that there have been some 200 guards and two Maxims to keep them in, no fewer than 110 have escaped at one time or another!

One of the "shows" was the miraculously dug tunnel by which the prisoners had planned their escape. It was about six feet wide, and high enough to permit a man to crawl through on hands and knees. Started inside one of the sheds, it emerged near the spot at which a Maxim was placed—the idea being to seize the gun when opportunity occurred and turn it on the guards! The greatest ingenuity had been displayed in disposing of the earth—most of it being used in making walls on to the lean-to sheds, though at first the earth was laid evenly along the interior, thus raising the floor imperceptibly a few inches above the "street" level. It was probably the walls which had aroused suspicion and caused the Boers to ask for the officers' assistance. The night they had selected to escape was the one after we arrived, and I am only sorry their plan was frustrated, now that 900 of them have been cruelly removed by the Transvaal Government to Machadodorp.

During my round I had a look in at the hospital, but was sorry to see 228 inmates, though most of them were not serious cases. There had, however, been fifty-six deaths at Waterval, two of which occurred during the past twenty-four hours. The arrangements at the hospital were so improved that one might almost have wondered at the stories one heard of them in the early part of the year, but there is little doubt that Mr Wood succeeded by extraordinary efforts in putting the hospital on a proper basis with the money so generously placed at his disposal by the British sympathisers. Nor should I omit a word of thanks to Mr De Souza, whose voice was repeatedly heard in the furtherance of this good work, and to Dr von Gernet, a Russian, who was latterly appointed by the Boer authorities to superintend the hospital, and who successfully demanded and received the wherewithal for the proper treatment of the inmates.

I met a man called Thomson in the 1st Royal Scots, who introduced himself as being a native of my own home at Dysart, and reminded me of

my having subscribed to some Highland gathering in Kirkcaldy! Mr Bailey, son of the M.P., was also there—one of the Imperial Yeomanry prisoners; and a real note of fellow-sympathy was touched by a New Zealand sergeant, who asked if he or his men could do anything for the comfort of the officers.

At half-past eight I hired a cart and pair of horses and hurried back to Pretoria, having received a message that Lord Roberts was hourly expected. I reached the Natal Bank about 10 A.M., after a two hours' drive, where I surrendered to my parole, but the American consul did not turn up. Mr Wood, however, was equal to every occasion, and we sought out the "authorities that were," who styled themselves the "Rust en Orde" Committee, and whose offices were in Church Square. I met Burgomaster Potgieter, Judge Gregorowski, Mr Samuel Marks, and other peacefully expectant burghers. The first thing was to get my parole renewed, or I might have been ordered back to my cage, which was the last place I meant to return to! This was granted, and then I asked permission to send the now

famous telegram, pointing out to the committee what an amount of good it would do them if it were shown they had done their best to preserve law and order. If premature, the telegram was at least valuable in that it disclosed the fact that "no resistance" was intended, and that the expensively built forts would take no part in the defence of Pretoria. It also announced "the departure of Kruger and the appointment of a 'Rust en Orde' Committee"; and so certain were the authorities that Lord Roberts would enter the town that day, that Messrs De Souza and Potgieter had attired themselves in their best clothes, and had the carriage harnessed in preparation for a drive "outside" in order to hand over the keys, a ceremony I was to be privileged to attend!

The sending of the telegram was the next move, and Leigh Wood and I went over to the post-office with the initialled message, and there interviewed Mr Sprawsen, the postmaster. A little douceur to the clerk, a little quiet conversation in a back room between Leigh Wood and Sprawsen, a little ticking of

the machine, and my duty to the 'Daily Mail' was fulfilled. The only doubt I had was as to whether the telegram would be "tapped" by Kruger's censors at Middelburg, but the clerk assured me he had sent it by a direct line *viâ* Barberton.

All this time the sound of cannon could be plainly heard to the south, and fighting was reported at Irene, the next station, about ten miles south. Having received an invitation to lunch at the Club — *tempora mutantur* — with the "Rust en Orde" Committee under the ægis of the genial "Sammy" Marks, Leigh Wood and I betook ourselves to this comfortable little building. There we found Sauer, an objectionable person and brother of the Bond man, De Souza looking nervous and worried, Potgieter a really charming old fellow, and Loveday, the progressive member for Barberton in the Transvaal Raad. To my dying day I shall never forget that luncheon-party, where I, "a prisoner on parole," was the guest of my quondam custodians!

The committee announced that they had been formed to protect life and property

The announcement was all very well, but how were they going to carry it out? Intentions were admirable, but *their* intentions lacked resource and fertility! And once again the vein of humour was distinctly noticeable in this tragic termination to a great struggle. Here the firm, brave, straightforward, resourceful man of tact was wanting, and certainly the departed Government had placed their deputies in as difficult a position as could well be imagined. Remember that the previous night President Kruger, Mr Reitz, Mr Schalk Burger, Mr Bredelle, &c., had slunk away from danger with one million pounds sterling in hard cash; and remember that a decision had been arrived at not to defend the capital, but to surrender it with the greatest expedition. But who were they to surrender to? It was indeed a case of "Hurry up, Lord Roberts." And through it all I noticed the fear of riot and the terror of murder among the exasperated burghers.

There was only one thing apparent (oh, how I wish W. S. Gilbert or R. Marshall had been there!)—a desire on the committee's part "to be good and do what they were told." Mr

Wood dictated, and Mr Wood was obeyed. Mr Wood was consulted, and Mr Wood gave his opinion. I think the Executive must have gone to bed that night with a prayer "for Roberts's arrival the next morning."

During the afternoon I found my way into the Raadzaal, and on such good terms was I with the Executive that, in lieu of my liberation "on parole," my liberation "with permission to remain in Pretoria" was substituted. Progress in my day's work might certainly be reported. Having entered the Raadzaal, I thought it quite worth having a look round, and here and there a little firmness resulted in my long-lost diary being restored to me, and several letters and papers which had been detained handed over for the benefit of my quondam prison companions.

Having shaken hands with nearly every Hollander, German, and foreigner of any importance in this tottering town, I thought it time to look up my quarters in the Grand Hotel, where rooms had been secured for me. I passed through Church Square, but not without noticing many scowls and overhearing

covert remarks at my khaki uniform. The American consul paid me a visit, and advised me to remain indoors, as he had been warned that my life would be jeopardised if I came into too close contact with the exasperated section of the fighting burghers. I followed his advice reluctantly, and amused myself as the evening drew on watching an excited crowd of Boers galloping hither and thither through Church Square. Suddenly a message was brought to me that the British had suffered a reverse near Johannesburg, and Lord Roberts's arrival must certainly be delayed. The news was alarming, but I confess I did not entirely believe it, and was much reassured by the rumble of cannon at ten o'clock at night which announced the departure eastward of two pom-poms and several fifteen-pounders that had just arrived by rail from the south. And then I slept.

May 31 *to June* 3. — I slump these four days into one, for the whirl of events which have taken place has likened my brain to the waters of Scylla and Charybdis, and if the result shows a heterogeneous conglomer-

ation of thought and incident, I beg you excuse me, for no one in Pretoria seems responsible for his actions. Where shall I begin? The end is close at hand, an end to a tragedy which strongly represents an irritating burlesque. I think I shall begin and work backwards.

It is midday on Sunday morning, June 3rd, and Lord Cecil Manners and I are sitting writing, while a reporter of the 'Liberté' and 'Ecole de France' is guarding the passage outside! He is a Frenchman with an ugly ferrety face and black oily hair, hardly of medium height, and with terror and hunger equally depicted on his face. He has just informed us that he came from Johannesburg about a fortnight ago, and being penniless, has been enrolled as a special policeman in Pretoria at 5s. a-day, which ("Wonderful!" he says) he has been paid so far. He looks upon us as two wild beasts, yet Lord Cecil Manners is only a harmless 'Morning Post' correspondent, captured on Tuesday near Germiston, and we are sharing a sitting-room and living on the best, while

the finishing touches are being put on this romantic yet Gilbertian drama. "How is it we are being guarded?" you ask. I will go back a little further and tell you.

After the warning that my life was in danger if I showed myself in the streets, I confined myself to my room, to patiently await Lord Roberts's arrival and watch the ever-changing scenes in Church Square. I succeeded in getting my prison clothes, personal property, kodak, and papers brought down from Chancery House, and I also got permission to cable again to the 'Daily Mail' the latest news. The following is a copy of my second cable:—

ROSSLYN. 'Daily Mail,' London.

Since cabling yesterday there is reported British repulse between here and Elandsfontein. Johannesburg was handed over this morning, 31st. Hardly expect British before Saturday. Church Square presents excited scene of burghers and guns entering and going out in all directions. Looting commenced, but committee working hard quell disturbance. Government issued *besluit* yesterday from Middelburg commandeering all money and securities from banks here, but com-

mittee appointed yesterday decline to carry out order, and are supported. Have got my release and allowed to remain here. American consul and Leigh Wood doing good work.

Whether these cables ever reached Lorenço Marques I do not know, but I was assured by the telegraph people, whose douceurs were getting terribly exhausting, that both had gone through. Mr Wood, Mr Woolley Dodd, Mr Marks, and Mr De Souza paid me frequent visits, and I gathered from them that Lord Roberts's presence was the only thing they required, and they hoped his arrival would not be delayed. Meanwhile a special police force had been organised by the Committee which I have already alluded to, but these at first proved powerless to arrest the looting of the Government stores. The roof was torn down on Thursday, and individuals with barrows and carts were seen rushing in all directions with their spoil, while the sound of shots was evidence that blood was being shed. The town was all the time full of burghers and excited mercenaries, and riot seemed imminent, when the "Rust en Orde"

police set to work. They did their duty uncommonly well, and though five lives were lost, the majority of the loot was recovered, and held under strong guard in the Square.

It was during this time of excitement that De Souza rushed up to me, and to my intense amusement showed me a cheque to himself from the Government on the National Bank (which he explained was only one of many). There was no need for his explanation, for I was cognisant already that not only were the National Bank coffers already denuded of their uttermost "ticky," and that President Kruger had taken the last million with him, but that the latest issue of "greenbacks" was being discounted in the streets at 50% to curiosity hunters. He told me the rage against the President was unbounded, and he himself was despatching a telegram to Oom Paul in none too delicate language! Just after this came a Government *besluit* from Middelburg to commandeer all the money and securities from the private banks here, which the Provisional Government refused to carry out; though, fearing an attempt might be made

to "rush" them, they were immediately closed and barricaded, and the inmates supplied with the wherewithal for resistance. The night, however, passed peacefully enough, and next morning the Commandant-General, Louis Botha, addressed the burghers from the Raadzaal steps (next to the Grand Hotel). He told them to be of good cheer, and announced a decisive victory in the neighbourhood of Johannesburg, in which he had taken 700 prisoners, but being unable to hold them, had liberated them on parole!

That same morning Lord Cecil Manners of the 'Morning Post' and Mr O'Donoghue of the 'Daily Chronicle,' with an officer of the 16th Lancers and Captain M'Ewan of the Intelligence Department, were brought in. After being temporarily accommodated in the night cells "for drunks," the two correspondents were brought before the authorities, and advised, though they were free men, to go to the officers' quarters for their own personal safety, it being impossible to put them back "through the lines." So thither they went, and late that evening both came down from the prison and

paid me a visit. Rumours were thick, and the last was that French was killed, Roberts surrounded, his lines of communication cut, and Kroonstad in the Boer hands, with innumerable prisoners! Johannesburg had, however, been handed over that morning at ten o'clock without resistance! The Boers were going through the town in hundreds with their cannon in an easterly direction, and I learnt that Eerste Fabrieken was their destination, and that they had decided to take up a formidable position in that neighbourhood, and give battle if the British tried to enter the town from that side. I had made all arrangements for despatching a messenger through the Boer lines to Lord Roberts, to inform him of what I knew, when my brother correspondents walked in and asked me to do what I could in that direction, and to let Lord Roberts know that the town itself would not be defended. They themselves, being on parole, could not move in the matter.

That night a totally different complexion of affairs was apparent when Louis Botha, with Erasmus and Lucas Meyer, remained for three

hours in close conclave with the Burgomaster and De Souza, and in telegraphic communication with the new seat of government at Machadodorp. The result was that, as Commandant-General, Louis Botha assumed the reins of office, and for "fear of the finger of scorn" decided to make a last stand south and east of Pretoria, and guard both these approaches. If their position was turned they were going to cut the communications and retire on Middelburg, and leave the town itself unmolested. Furthermore, the already appointed Committee were discharged, their resolutions cancelled, and Mr Schutte (the landrost), Mr Siedermann, and Mr Sandberg, appointed in their place, with Mr Smuts (the attorney) as legal adviser to Louis Botha. All this time messages were brought me that my arrest was imminent, and one or two did not hesitate to say I should be shot if I showed my nose outside. I was further advised to go back to the officers' quarters. But I had no desire for this, and believed it was only a scare, so decided to remain where I was to see and hear all that was going on.

On Friday morning reports of some truth

reached us that Lord Roberts's advance column was only nine miles this side of Johannesburg, and the main force some way south of Zuurfontein, or twenty-three miles off. It was quite apparent that it must still be a matter of a day or two before he would arrive. Primed with this information, I left the hotel by a back door, and drove up to Chancery House with Mr Leigh Wood and Lord Cecil Manners; and while the former doled out the Government allowance of £25, I had the opportunity of a long chat with my late fellow-prisoners. It was when we came out that the commandant of the officers' prison (who has shown us marked civility since the President's departure) told Mr Wood to advise me to keep indoors, that it was quite common talk in the town I was going to be arrested, and that my life was in considerable danger. We got back, however, in safety, although an attempt to steal our horses from our cab was with difficulty frustrated—those in private stables, in the tram-cars, and in any vehicle, having long ago been openly stolen in the streets; and it was that evening, just as I had intended sending Lord Roberts another

messenger, that some one came into town and brought us news that he had crossed the Boer lines at Six-Miles Spruit, and was under the impression that Pretoria had been evacuated! So this daring messenger took back all the information there was, but chiefly we advised him to beg Lord Roberts to see his wires were properly cut. Will you believe it, that at this end, listening to his every word, the telephone officials at Johannesburg were heard to say: "Can't you get Kroonstad?" "I must have Kroonstad." "Kroonstad, are you there?" This, no doubt, gave rise to the rumour that Lord Roberts's line of communication had been cut. Moreover, his message to England was distinctly heard when he announced his occupation of Johannesburg, and was immediately followed by the hurried exclamation of surprise by the Johannesburg clerk, "Good God! they're listening to us at Pretoria." What I write has been vouched for, and is perfectly true.

Lord Cecil Manners having walked up to the officers' quarters to lunch, the American consul called. While he was sitting with

me four armed guards appeared, and one walked in and apparently thought he had come to the wrong room; though Mr Hay remarked, "I thought there was going to be trouble, and that they'd come for you!" He had hardly left me when Mr Schlomer (the proprietor) introduced a very civil, cunning-looking man, with a white paper in his hand, who informed me he had come for me with an order from Mr Smuts, the State attorney. So mischief *was* brewing! Lord Cecil Manners and Mr O'Donoghue were also mentioned on the paper.

Without any sign of annoyance or discomfort I got my hat, and telling the proprietor to accompany me, I ordered the detective to take me to Mr Smuts's office. As I closed and locked my window and door, I saw two women grinning at me from the balcony. They were secret spies in the pay of the police! I knew that. One I had been warned against — she was a Russian, and a Boer General's friend—and I was determined to have my say when the day of reckoning arrived! Out by the back door to avoid

any unpleasantness and because it was the nearest way, and then we found Smuts's office closed, so it was suggested I should go and see the lieutenant of police. Nothing loth, I followed my guard, who was affable in the extreme, and apparently knew no reason for my arrest; and then Du Toit (the big lieutenant of police I had met and disliked the day of my arrival in Pretoria) saluted me (what was coming over him?), and introduced me to some other official. I asked what was wanted. They said they knew of the order of arrest, but not its cause, and I suggested I should go back to my room, have my lunch, and remain there till Smuts could see me. This seemed to meet their views, and back I came, having meanwhile, in answer to their inquiries, told them that Lord Cecil Manners had gone to lunch at the officers' prison. "Oh, that is all right!" they said; "he will be detained there!" Imagine my astonishment on finding Manners here on my return, entry to the prison having been firmly but courteously refused him unless he wished to remain! Meanwhile I

had sent for the American consul and Mr Wood. The latter arrived, got on the telephone with the State attorney, and arranged a meeting with Manners and myself at 2.30. There it was explained to us that our safety was endangered, and that Louis Botha had issued the order for that reason; that De Souza & Co. had no right to give me my release, but that if we did not wish to go back to Chancery House he would accept our "paroles" to remain in our rooms at the hotel. We could go over the border if we wished, but we could not be put through the lines! Vainly we protested that we were free men and correspondents, and that there was no charge against us! Mr Smuts's sole desire was to keep us safe from danger! So back we went, quite satisfied. In a short time a Hollander, who spoke French, appeared with an order from Smuts, declaring us *prisoners of war* (!) confined to our rooms, and to be guarded by six armed police! The word "parole" is not understood in this country, and but for the annoyance it caused the hotel proprietor

we should not have cared, but rather sympathised with our protectors, who stood rifle in hand in the dark draughty passage. The American consul remonstrated, but considering that two of our sentries are Italians and a third the French reporter I have already alluded to, there is a delightful and humorous side to the whole situation. If it were not that Smuts was so small and insignificant, I should have liked to kick him!

One amusing little anecdote I must tell of our big fat Italian guard. If my French is not correct or if the word "voir" should have a prefix to make the story a good one you must forgive me. He came the night after he was stationed to watch us, and knocked at my door. In his best French he said: "Ayez la bonté, monsieur, de garder mon fusil. Je veux sortir voir ma femme. Je retournerai à minuit." "Certainement," I said, and he left me, his prisoner, in charge of his rifle, during which Louis Botha and Colonel Blake came in, but tactfully said nothing, or saw nothing. Then the guard returned, and I handed him back his rifle. Such is humour in war.

The rooms I occupied were always used by Dr Leyds when he was in Pretoria, so it was not unnatural that Colonel Blake of the Irish-American Brigade should also find his way in! Such was the case, and for the last three days we saw a good deal of the man who strongly objects to the word "notorious" being prefixed to his name. Whatever there may be against him, his face belies his character. It is one of those strong open countenances, with clear blue eyes, which must attract whomsoever he meets. He is slightly bald on the top of the head, with curly grey-brown hair, now grown quite long and hanging back almost over his neck. Dressed in a black coat, breeches, and long boots, the only ornament he wears is a piece of green ribbon halved with the American colours in his black felt hat. To one hand is always attached a sjambok, with which he frequently emphasises his strong yet straightforward language. It is to the wounded arm (his right) that the sjambok hangs—wounded, I believe, by a piece of shell near Ladysmith. Half wild, yet gentle—bold, fearless buccaneer, yet full of intelligence—well read, well educated, but soured and changed

LOUIS BOTHA ADDRESSING BURGHERS IN CHURCH SQUARE, PRETORIA, 30TH MAY, ANNOUNCING BRITISH DEFEAT, JOHANNESBURG.

COLONEL BLAKE, OF THE IRISH-AMERICAN BRIGADE, MAY 1900.

by some misfortune—whose home is nowhere—whose language is his own, yet every one else's—who could with gentleness be led by a bit of thread—Colonel Blake is *the* type of adventurer one reads of in a novel, yet never expects to meet; and I confess to almost a feeling of admiration for the man whose only reason for fighting is want of occupation and a hatred for Rhodes.

I might tell you of many an interesting conversation I had with him,—how he glanced over the picture papers with delight, and recounted his thrilling life during the war, and how he said he had heard a price had been put upon his head! He told me he would fight to the end, and was riding a horse marked 5 D. G., B 136, which he took at Ladysmith, and which is also branded with the letters J. H. Colonel Blake's idea was that the war would last for months, and that we would never capture the mountain strongholds near Lydenburg, to which the Boers would retire, without our losing 30,000 men! There they had food for two years and plenty of ammunition to carry on the war. He spoke in highest terms of the pluck of the British

soldier, but wondered at the close formations in which we attacked, and our lack of dash in not following up our victories. He had only 140 men left, and did not believe that 3000 Boers would remain fighting after Pretoria was taken; but 3000 could hold the positions they were going to take up! You will wonder at it, but I hope I may some day meet this man again. He was born in America in 1856, and of course "Labby" could tell you as much about him as I can. His favourite author is Carlyle, and only standard works will he read—"Never a novel," he said. He came for the last time on Monday morning, June 4, to say good-bye, and brought us a bottle of whisky as a token of friendship; and when he said he might not be back that night, that he was going out "a lawng way" to meet the enemy, I knew the British were at hand, and that it meant a retreat of the Boer forces. I break off here, for my head is still dizzy with the rapidity of revolution through which these few days have been passed, and in the next chapter you will read of the surrender of Pretoria.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SURRENDER OF PRETORIA.

THE FIRST SHELL — WE WATCH THE FIGHT FROM THE UPPER BALCONY — A HIDEOUS BREACH OF HONOUR — THE BOERS RETREAT — A PEEP AT LONG TOM — ARRANGEMENTS FOR SURRENDER — EXCITING ATTEMPT TO REMOVE US — THE BRITISH OFFICERS RESIST — A CRY OF RECOGNITION — ENTRY OF THE BRITISH TROOPS — LORD ROBERTS ARRIVES — THE GREAT REVIEW.

June 4 *and* 5. — The day of reckoning has come at last! Pretoria is in the British hands. But I must tell my tale methodically. I brought you in my last chapter to my farewell with Colonel Blake, who had hardly left the room when the sound of distant cannon was distinctly audible. It was about ten o'clock on the morning of June 4 that the first shell burst inside the hills which surround the Transvaal capital. The news was brought to

us by Mr Schlomer, the proprietor of the Grand Hotel, and Manners and I rushed out to the balcony to find the work had begun in earnest, but apparently without response, which was as I had anticipated. Pretoria and its forts were being shelled from three different convergent points! As the fun grew faster and more furious, and our coign of vantage was on the wrong side of the hotel, I arranged with my armed guards, who were trembling visibly, to go on to the upper balcony, which gave a more southern aspect, and allowed us to criticise the gun practice of the British army. It was a curious, not to say exciting, position, to be standing in the centre of the enemies' capital, waiting for the supreme moment when we should be set free; but by two o'clock the firing had increased to such an extent that we were convinced the happy hour when our anticipations would be realised could not be long deferred.

The American consul came up and told us that bits of shell had smashed through his windows at Sunnyside. One, I believe, fell on to the racecourse where our sick and wounded

were confined. But it was very obvious that the forts and railway to Middelburg were the targets of the British artillery, and though unseen, were evidently located by means of the balloon. A shell burst right in the centre of the gun-denuded forts, scattering a few too venturesome sightseers, while the railway-line was a good deal damaged. Speculation was rife as to which force it was that was attacking, but we had little doubt that if French was on one of the flanks it would be Lord Roberts himself who would enter the Transvaal capital. I wondered anxiously if he was only feinting from the south, and would risk an entry from the east through the dangerous passes of Eerste Fabrieken, as was anticipated by the Boer generals; but that my fears were ill-grounded is now well known.

Meanwhile a hideous breach of honour was being committed by the Transvaal Government. Melt Marais himself and a commando were at Waterval removing our unfortunate prisoners to Machadodorp, about sixty-nine miles east of Middelburg, on the Delagoa Bay railway. By one o'clock they had succeeded in despatching

three train-loads, containing 900 of the Gloucesters, Royal Irish Fusiliers, and Suffolks; and then they desisted in their dastardly work either from fear of being cut off themselves or for want of the necessary rolling-stock. You may wonder why I have used the words "hideous" and "dastardly." I will explain. When the twenty officers went to Waterval to pacify the men, they acceded to the Transvaal Government's request for their assistance on two conditions: (1) that the twenty officers were to be on parole, and (2) that the men at Waterval should *not* be removed. This breach of honour is one which will not only wring the deepest expression of sympathy for the unfortunate prisoners from every honourable man, but will call forth the world's righteous indignation at the cowardly trick of the Transvaal Government. *Revenons à nos moutons!*

About four in the afternoon first one, then another, then in twos and threes, followed by larger sections and small commandos, the Boers began to cross Church Square from west to east, and the setting sun sank on a scene of scuttle I shall never forget. For the majority

there seemed no disposition to hurry, their minds being evidently occupied with the hopelessness of their cause. There was no panic, no excitement; and their guns, mostly 12-pounders and pom-poms, were dragged quietly through the town along the Middelburg road by teams of mules, whose drivers apparently had no fear of being cut off. "Long Tom," the notorious, went past the hotel a little earlier with a span of thirty-two oxen attached to it. After the guns had gone the quiet stillness of the town was only occasionally disturbed by the gallop of a despatch rider conveying messages from General Louis Botha, who remained in the town till a late hour of the night. About 6 P.M. a British officer, bearing a flag of truce, entered the town and demanded its surrender, and arrangements were made for the formal proceedings to take place early the following morning. Manners and I were congratulating ourselves on our good fortune, though still somewhat uncertain of what had actually occurred, when, having gone into my bedroom, I was surprised by his rushing in with the news that a man had just come up to say we must prepare to leave in

half an hour. The order had come from Machadodorp that on no account was I to be left in Pretoria, and I detected the machinations of that wicked woman spy, and determined to be even with her yet. Manners and I held a hurried consultation, at which I decided to jump into bed very ill with an unheard-of complaint, while he went off to see the commandant of the forts, who was the latest appointment to the management of demoralised Pretoria. There, after being kept waiting a long time, he argued unsuccessfully that we were free men, and that no charge had been brought against us. Captain De Korti regretted that his instructions were imperative, and that Schalk Burger, the vice-president himself, had come from Machadodorp to see the order carried out. Then Manners, having informed the commandant that my illness forbade of my removal, hurried back with the bad news, and prepared for the worst by eating a hurried dinner and packing up a few garments. At the same time I advised him to resist as far as possible, to maintain that I was seriously ill, and that he must remain to

nurse me or see me moved into hospital! Quarter-hours followed quarter-hours and no one came for us. I got out of bed several times and joined Manners in the sitting-room; but just as we thought that the authorities must have given up the idea of moving us, we heard a heavy tread along the passage outside. I had just time to tumble into bed when the door opened, and De Korti came in and followed Manners to my bedside, where I was groaning audibly and begging for brandy and a doctor! The commandant had brandy in his flask, and what I did not the least require I had perforce to swallow! Manners' voice as he spoke of my illness was choking with suppressed laughter, and it was all I could do to prevent myself from bursting into hysterics, so ludicrous was the situation. But De Korti was a good chap after all, and I think saw through my shamming fit, and allowed us to remain, as Schalk Burger and Smuts had gone. He left us with the remark that he would wire to Machadodorp that we had missed our train!

All this time another scene, as dramatic as any in the campaign, was being enacted in Chancery

House—the British officers' prison. They had been placed in the same precarious position as we had been, and the story of how they successfully resisted the order for their removal is worth recording in the words of an officer who was present :—

All day long we had sat watching the lyddite bursting on the opposite heights, and our hearts were aglow with the thought that this time at any rate there was no doubt about it, and that our release on the morrow was the "stonewall"-est of certainties. To bed therefore we went, happy in the feeling that this would be the last night spent within the walls of our tin prison.

Our expectations were nearly realised in a very different manner to that which we hoped for.

At 12.45 A.M. we were woke by the glare of electric light, and the voice of our commandant, telling us to get up at once, pack our kits, and be ready to start off in two hours—destination unknown. The facts of the case took some time to dawn upon our sleepy brains, but when once it came over us that this was no bad dream, and that in sober reality we were to be spirited away while freedom was almost within our grasp, we realised that something must be done if this crushing calamity was to be averted.

The night was bitterly cold, and shivering were the

groups of excited and pyjama'd officers who anxiously discussed the situation.

Some were for a "masterly inactivity," but the majority were in favour of striking a blow.

We approached the commandant with protests and demands for explanation, but these were only met with the reply that he knew nothing, and was only a blind agent of the powers that were. At the same time a reconnoitring party reported the arrival of a commando—presumably to escort us away—and ruin seemed to stare us in the face.

Any action we were to take must be prompt—and prompt it was. The commandant was told that nothing short of "an ounce of lead" should induce us to move, and that meanwhile he and his second in command were our prisoners! The result was that he soon resigned himself to the inevitable, and came round to a common-sense view of the situation. On our explaining our compact with the Government, made when we sent twenty officers to Waterval, the nature of which he had apparently not realised before, he gave us his promise that, on condition of our restoring to him his liberty, he would not only refrain from taking any active steps towards our removal, but would, as far as possible, put obstacles in the way of it. Accordingly we set him free, and despatched him to parley with the commando. He is believed to have reported our attitude to them, and to have declined to take any steps before receiving further instructions

from Botha. Their reply was heated, and some wrangling ensued, but the result was that—for what purpose we know not—the commando retired, as also did the trollies which had been sent for our kits. Thus our primary object of gaining time was attained, and all went to bed again, congratulating ourselves on the success of our manœuvre. By no means, however, did we imagine ourselves out of the wood; and when, half an hour later, the electric light was extinguished, it came as a relief to all, for we gathered from this, and from the peace and quiet which reigned outside, that we were at all events to be left alone till the morning, and such proved to be the case.

Great was the anxiety with which next day we scanned the horizon for signs of the troops, as we could not feel safe till the latter were in occupation of the town. When at last two of our deliverers, the Duke of Marlborough and Mr Winston Churchill, appeared at the gallop, wild was the enthusiasm, and, amidst cheers that "made the welkin ring," the Transvaal flag was exchanged for the union-jack. Our manœuvre had met with a success which was far beyond our dreams, and the joy of our deliverance was greatly enhanced by the narrow shave we had had. The last night of our captivity was one which we shall not easily forget!

The morning of June 5th dawned joyously. Our troops were in the railway station, and

the khaki advance-guard was approaching, when I sent off a cable to London announcing the news. The wire to Lorenço Marques had not been cut, and I hoped to be the first correspondent to get the news through before the British took possession of the telegraph-office. About nine o'clock a small detachment rode down Markt Street. As they passed me standing on the balcony, I heard a shout, "Hullo, there's Harry!" It was Marlborough, who had recognised me. A tremendous cheer, taken up on both sides, rent the air as Major Maude, the first British officer, entered Church Square. This small party was presently followed by another, and soon the streets became full of the bearded and begrimed soldiers who had so bravely fought their way from the Modder river. The Guards and Lincolns were the earliest on the scene. All the streets were at once lined, ingress and exit being strictly barred, while sentries were stationed on the various Government buildings.

We were free once more! Once more with the British army! You would have thought that was sufficient to make me forget my lady

spy! But no, the spirit of revenge was on me, and, stalking to her room, I raised my hat, and, in the most ferociously dramatic manner, said, "Madam, I arrest you in the name of the Queen!" Then rushing off, I found the first Intelligence officer available, who proved to be Abe Bailey. He immediately placed a guard over her room, telling me that this notorious Russian lady, in the secret service of the Transvaal Government, had been "wanted" for some time.

To describe the ensuing events would require the pen of poor George Steevens. For me, I cannot pretend to depict the ever-changing scenes which preceded Lord Roberts's arrival at two o'clock — scenes which will never be forgotten by those who witnessed them. Dutchmen and Hollanders kept themselves tactfully in the background. Friend met friend with the warmest handshake; men who had never seen each other offered their heartiest congratulations. The black population joined in the universal rejoicing; and through the chaos of it all, the chief officials went about their various duties.

THE FIRST TROOPS ENTERING PRETORIA, 5TH JUNE.

Duke of Marlborough. Major Maude.

Mr Winston Churchill

WAITING FOR "BOBS," CHURCH SQUARE, PRETORIA, 5TH JUNE.

A general desire to "tell" was evinced by those who sought to curry favour by laying information. The men who had been "sitting on the fence" were particularly prominent, with both feet now on the British side and their cowardly character prominently depicted. But these were only passing side-shows in the great transformation-scene.

Church Square was surrounded by a khaki line of glittering bayonets, and every available position was soon occupied from which a glimpse could be had of the coming spectacle. The Transvaal flags had been torn down, to make way for union-jacks which had so long been concealed. Kodaks and cameras were almost as plentiful as pocket-handkerchiefs, and the hotel-bar keepers did a roaring trade. At two o'clock a body of mounted men, wending its way down Markt Street towards Church Square from the railway station, heralded the arrival of Lord Roberts and his brilliant staff. The distant cheers swelled into a gigantic roar as the Commander-in-Chief took up his position opposite to the Raadzaal, and the union-jack was hoisted to the top of the flagstaff. The

flag was a very small one, but we knew it had been made by the hands of one who, sorrowing for her brave dead son, sought consolation and found it in the popularity and success of our beloved commander.

Then came the Review. The Guards led the way. As regiment succeeded regiment at the saluting base each received its ovation from the excited crowd. Perhaps the kilted warriors—Gordons, Black Watch, and Cameronians—were specially favoured in their reception, to say nothing of the goat of the Welsh regiment. But when the South African and other Colonial forces took their places with the C.I.V., they were greeted with a perfect torrent of enthusiasm.

Almost a hush fell on the spectators at the size and number of our guns, and the niggers rolled their great eyes and opened their still greater mouths.

One felt indeed that comparisons were out of place, and that the honours rested equally with the whole of that brave force which for so many months had fought its way slowly but steadily to Pretoria.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A WEEK WITH THE BRITISH ARMY IN PRETORIA.

LORD BROOKE—EVENTS IN PRETORIA—COURTS OF INQUIRY—A WANT OF FORETHOUGHT—THE 'IMPERIALIST' AND THE PRESS CENSOR—BURNHAM—CUT OFF FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD—NEED OF REST—HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

June 12.—The great review of 15,000 troops in Church Square was hardly a matter of the past when General French's column arrived from the west. There was almost a feeling of regret that the man who had done so much in the campaign should not have been represented in the memorable spectacle, and that Baden-Powell, too, should have been an absentee; but then there must always be some one left to do the dirty work of watching the slim Boer—else were we in a worse plight than we are! In this con-

nection our entry into Pretoria was looked upon as the end of the war to such an extent that report had it that Louis Botha, in the general excitement and confusion, had himself been a quiet spectator of the review. *Est-ce possible?* What was my astonishment to find my young nephew, Brooke, acting as extra galloper to General French! The boy is only just seventeen years of age, but such was his enthusiasm and enterprise that, authorities or no authorities, examination or no examination, he not only found his way to the front, but has also done remarkably well.

Event has followed event in quick succession. Lord Roberts has inspected and said a kindly word to each of the officers who were lately prisoners of war; courts of inquiry are sitting to formally inquire into the cause of our respective captures; the men have been removed from Waterval to a camp inside the precincts of the town; I have attempted to start a newspaper, and have been prevented by the press censor. Burnham, the famous scout, has been seriously injured during his last reconnaissance, and is lying uncomplainingly on his back in

a comfortable house; poor Neil Haig, of the Inniskilling Dragoons, is dangerously ill with enteric fever; General Maxwell has been appointed governor of the town, and Major Poore (of cricket and polo fame) provost-marshal; and though hundreds of Boers are daily riding into the town to hand over their arms and take the oath of neutrality, a big battle is raging in the neighbourhood of Hatherley and Eerste Fabricken. As I must touch on one or two of these subjects, I will begin with the courts of inquiry, which are merely waste of time and necessary to keep up the old-fashioned red-tape system of military procedure.

It is unnecessary, moreover it is undesirable, at this juncture to censure or reprove those who have suffered already from long imprisonment. Only two or three days ago an officer, whose name shall be unwritten, committed suicide after he had stood the formal trial. I do not suggest that the deed was due to harsh treatment, as he had shown signs of melancholy during his incarceration. Another officer, lately a brother-prisoner of mine, was also insulted after he had been before the court,

not by the members themselves, but by an officer of high rank, who should have known better. Turning for a moment to the removal of the men from Waterval, no provision had been made for their reception in the town. They were marched fourteen miles, and had scarcely a blanket to keep them warm during the night, when the spacious and magnificent artillery barracks could easily have been utilised for their convenience. They were not likely to groan at rejoining their old comrades, but many of the latter would willingly have cooked them a supper in readiness for their arrival had the forethought of the officials given them timely warning.

Regarding the proposed newspaper, Cecil Manners and I had planned it all out while still prisoners in the Boer hands. Its name was the 'Imperialist,' its motto that of the Transvaal, "Eendracht maakt macht" (Union is strength). It was to be printed in Dutch as well as English, for which a special interpreter had been engaged, and the staff and plant of the now defunct 'Volksstem' had been taken over temporarily. Its contents

included a moderate, well-considered, and carefully discussed leading article on the situation, a description of the entry into Johannesburg, and a similar article on the surrender of Pretoria from both inside and out. Poetry, too, found a corner. The addresses of the various officials, very necessary in the first days of chaos, were given, and Lord Roberts's proclamation was also included. Among those who were assisting us with the first number were Mr Prevost Battersby of the 'Morning Post' and Mr Nissen of the 'Cape Times.' The press censor, Lord Stanley, rightly deserves the distinction he has achieved among correspondents as the "press suppressor." He seemed to be the king instead of the commander-in-chief! As a matter of course, I went to obtain his permission to start the paper. Lord Cecil Manners and I were the two last correspondents who should have made such a request, in such extraordinary bad odour did we seem to be with him. He promptly refused, giving me to understand that no paper could be started without the consent of the "chief." Nothing

daunted, I started off for the British Residency in Sunnyside, where Lord Roberts saw me for a moment in the presence of Captain Laycock and the Duke of Westminster. "You must see the press censor about that," Lord Roberts said. I explained that I had done so, and been refused on the ground that he must first be consulted. Lord Roberts asked me a few questions as to its nature, &c., and whether I intended making the paper a permanent one. My reply to the latter question was, "That depends on you, sir, and on the reception it gets from its readers." "Very good," said the chief; "I have no objection." Away I went delighted. I thought it my duty to inform the press censor of Lord Roberts's consent, and on my return to the hotel at once wrote him a note to that effect, at the same time giving him the title of the paper and assuring him that a copy would be submitted to him before publication. Next day, while I was at press, Major Cochrane, who was assisting the provost-marshal, came in and regretted having to serve me with an order forbidding the publication. He told

"BOBS" IS COMING—ENTRY OF LORD ROBERTS INTO PRETORIA.

THE REVIEW OF TROOPS, PRETORIA, 5TH JUNE.

me, or I might possibly only have guessed it, that Lord Stanley had come into the provost-marshal's office very angry and demanded the issue of this order. I had no recourse but to acquiesce. It is worthy of note that on tackling Lord Stanley that afternoon he denied having been the cause of the newspaper's suppression; but a letter from Lord Roberts informing me that I must submit to the press censor's order gave me no hope of finding any further occupation in Pretoria.[1]

I have related this incident at some length, not so much as a personal grievance, to which I am already hardened, as to show the nature of the man who controlled the post and telegraph wires, and put every impediment in the way of the press, who are, to say the least of it, the representatives of the British public. Nor am I the only one to grieve, for, with few exceptions, each correspondent can tell his own tale of woe.

Turning to a more pleasant subject, I must touch on the great services rendered to Lord

[1] Lord Stanley himself started a paper on June 26—just a fortnight after I left!

Roberts by the famous American scout, Burnham. It was bad luck for him getting rolled on by his horse just before the surrender of Pretoria, after he had escaped a close-range Boer volley. His story, told me while lying patiently on his back, content with his promotion from subaltern to captain, with which Lord Roberts had rewarded him for his services, was as follows. He had ridden round by the east of Pretoria to destroy the railway line, when he found himself within a few paces of a Boer patrol. "Hands up," they shouted, but believing little in their skill as short-range shooters, Burnham galloped past them in the dusk, at the same time throwing himself over the far side of his pony. Six times was his pony hit, but the plucky beast carried its burden out of danger, and then rolled over on its rider—stone dead. The muscles of Burnham's stomach were much injured, but he crawled to the line and gallantly carried out his mission. It was next day before he was brought into Pretoria. He is one of the most charmingly modest Americans I have ever met. His feat of living two days in an ant-bear hole

with the Boers "on top of him" was only one of his many exciting adventures during the war.

Since the entry of the British troops into Pretoria 2300 rifles have been stacked in a week, but a large proportion no doubt represent those found in Government buildings or in the houses of non-combatants. The sight before the Raadzaal each morning as the Boers swarmed round the entrance, completely smothering the small detachment of troops on guard, was well worth seeing, though the free-and-easy method of distributing passes made me wonder if the British believed as much as one-half of what the burghers told them. After Generals Carew, Hamilton, and French had gone east to do battle with the threatening Botha, there certainly seemed more Boers in the town than British, and I doubt not that our leniency will cause us some little trouble in the near future, from my knowledge of the cunning and treachery of the slim Boers, many of whom purposely gave up their arms in order to obtain information for their fighting brothers in the field. All this time we are cut

off from the outside world, both by rail and telegraph—truly a curious position for a victorious army! Lord Kitchener has gone south to see if he can set to rights the mischief of De Wet, and reorganise the distribution of troops on the lines of communication, and prevent any more convoys being snapped up. These comparatively trivial losses are more serious than they would appear on first sight, and there is little doubt that the hurried yet magnificent march of our troops on Johannesburg and Pretoria has left our communications' generals either unequal to or unprepared for the task of checkmating the great mobility of the Orange Free State commandos, especially that of my friend De Wet.

I am not quite sure if life in this beleaguered city, after a term of excitement and imprisonment, is conducive to either sanity or wealth, for the rush and bustle, added to the exorbitant demands on a limited purse for hotel accommodation, are likely to leave me brainless and penniless. Pretoria is like London in the height of the season, without, of course, the frocks and furbelows; and possibly the return to

old England will find too many of the latter's fair wearers to restore an equilibrium wellnigh upset by the events of the past six months. But as there is nothing left for me to do here, I shall risk falling between two stools, and steal away by the first available truck as soon as the line is reopened. If with regret I leave behind me a host of friends, I shall carry with me the most cherished memories of my life; but the very system of greeting, the perpetual repetition of my own adventures, and the ever-varied descriptions of those I shall forsake, have grown so wearisome that the quiet of a home is necessary to counteract their effect.

News just reaches me that the line to Bloemfontein will be open to-morrow; and there also come the sad tidings of poor young Cavendish's death, with whom I had only shaken hands three days ago. And Airlie is dead too, and Seymour Fortescue's brother! One wonders why a God above allows a dopper king to still further redden a country's soil in so forlorn a cause. Vengeance, we cry! But vengeance is not ours! And now that Pretoria is ours, now that the vanquishing of the Transvaal and Orange Free

State is practically a *fait accompli*, let us set ourselves to the task of ruling our new possessions as they should be ruled, with firmness and dignity, tempered with justice and mercy. Let us not be dictators but conciliators, and from sadness and sorrow will spring triumph and joy, and the greatness of Britain will once more be displayed before the greedy, jealous, and cunning eyes of the whole world.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

One word in conclusion: Major-General Baden-Powell, who is unmistakably popular among the Boer section, would make a splendid and acceptable governor of our new possession.

CHAPTER XXVII.

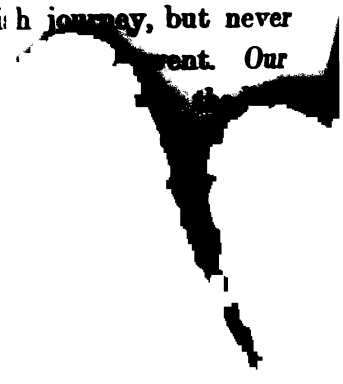
AN EXCITING JOURNEY HOME.

I DECLINE THE RISK—FELLOW-PASSENGERS—THE TAIL END OF A FIGHT—GROSS NEGLECT—LOVAT'S SCOUTS—RETALIATION—COLONEL SPENS—THE HERTS YEOMANRY—A UNIQUE INCIDENT—KENT REGIMENTS—THEODORE BRINCKMAN—PRO-BOERS AS RAILWAY SERVANTS—A PROTEST—THE PIONEERS AND ROYAL LANCASTER MILITIA—MAJOR LUMLEY—A SUDDEN HALT.

June 18.—You would think my record of adventure ought to have ceased when Lord Roberts entered Pretoria, but the events of the last few days have been so exciting, and so full of novelty and interest, that I take up my pen once more to describe my journey home through the practically conquered countries of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. I had delayed my departure from Pretoria for a few days, with a view to going across to

General Buller for the 'Morning Post,' but the activity of Christian de Wet in the newly named colony, the absence of authentic information of Buller's exact whereabouts, and the fact that the railroad was cut and communication by telegraph interrupted, made me pause before risking a third capture by riding 150 miles from Vredefort to Botha's Pass. That was my intention, thanks to Mr Battersby of the 'Morning Post.' But the big fight which was to end the war at Eerste Fabrieken was still in progress and going so satisfactorily, and a despatch announcing a great victory in the Free State over De Wet had just been received, that I decided on home instead of more adventure, and set off on Wednesday morning, June 13, at 8 A.M., in an open coal-truck in company with Captain Wester, the Swedish military attaché.

We expected a roughish journey, but never anticipated the experience. Our first stage brought us [illegible] had not then been quite [illegible] and carried our lugga[illegible] wooden boxes full of



Wolseley valise containing some clothes, and a bundle of rugs) for about half a mile to another train, where we were fortunate enough to find a third-class compartment without any windows! We started again about 10 A.M. for Elandsfontein, with the cheery information that we might possibly get on to Vereeniging, but certainly no farther! On our way we were delayed at Zuurfontein for two specials to pass us going up to Pretoria from Johannesburg with the Gordons and some artillery. These reinforcements, coupled with the fact that I had that morning at 6 A.M. seen two batteries gallop through the town in the direction of Eerste Fabrieken, somewhat belied the official information that all was going well—information which I received from a friend on Lord Roberts's staff, who told me as I was starting that communication with Bloemfontein had just been re-established, that De Wet had been smashed up, and that that night would probably see the complete surrender of Botha's forces at Eerste Fabrieken.

We reached Elandsfontein, however, without incident, having a chat here and there with the

troops on the lines of communication, including Lumsden's Horse (a fine body of men from India), and various railway staff officers, some of whom had been selected from my quondam fellow-prisoners. At Elandsfontein an extremely stout and still more uncivil station-master ordered us out, and we had to wait till five before the train for Vereeniging started. It was a great joy to find we could reach that place, but it was more than doubtful if we should get any "forrarder" that night, so we replenished from the refreshment-room the few stores we had brought with us, and there found two more adventurous travellers on the platform — Mr Hutton, Reuter's correspondent, whom I had last met at Ladysmith, and Dick Liebert, an old friend of mine, both of whom had come from Johannesburg. Liebert had been doing good and voluntary work with Murray Guthrie in the military parcels office. Our party was still further reinforced, before we started, by a 'Black and White' artist, and by one or two officers of Roberts's Horse, who had been allowed to resign their commissions and go home. Captain Wester, too, found a

The wrecked Bridge at Irene, showing new crib work.

Train passing over deviation bridge at Kroonstadt (Walsh River).

A "construction" truck with railway sleepers at Vredefort Weg,
14th June 1900.

The burnt and derailed truck between Vredefort Weg and Kopjes,
14th June 1900.

friend and fellow-countryman going down, Lieut. Erland de Kleen, an officer in the Swedish artillery, who had also come out for military purposes. A little party of eleven, we tucked ourselves as best we could into open trucks and a third-class compartment, and reached Vereeniging about 8 P.M. without incident. The staff officer there was not at all inclined to let us proceed in a "construction" train which was just departing for Vredefort Road, but on showing our passes we were permitted to go as we pleased, the only stipulation being that one of two covered trucks was not to be used, as it contained some Boer prisoners and their guard. The other we found already seized, and while half was full of railway sleepers with which the "construction" train was loaded, the other half was strewn with blanketed human forms — most of them being "gentlemen in khaki ordered south." Wester and I were both lucky to find corners in this crowded horsebox; but I do not know which of us was the more to be sympathised with next morning—he so stiff from his cramped, all-night sitting, or I from a violent cold due to the draughty open grating

near which I had to lie with a bag of letters for the Secretary of State from Lord Roberts as my pillow.

With the dim morning light, almost frozen with the intense cold, I regarded the scene on the floor of that horsebox with curiosity. A ludicrous one it was! Whilst I was scrutinising and "palling" up to my fellow-passengers, I noticed the forms of two more stowaways on the top of the sleepers near the roof. One proved to be Captain Maxwell, A.D.C. to Lord Roberts, who was carrying the mails I had unwittingly used for my pillow, but on being assured they were safe he went to sleep again. It was too dark to see the "deviation" made over the Vaal, and we reached Vredefort Weg about 5 A.M., and soon proceeded down the line to the railhead, where the sleepers and Basutos whom we had picked up *en route* were being eagerly awaited by the engineers.

We had hardly left the station when sounds of firing ahead of us were distinctly audible, and looking out into the cold grey dawn we discovered ourselves the unexpected witnesses of a fight. Shells were visible bursting on the

left of the railway, and some mounted men and two guns, evidently our own, were galloping and being galloped about on either side of the line. To move on was impossible, and we got out to have a look at the proceedings, which proved to be the tail end of an attack on our engineers, which the Boers had made in the dead of night. Right in front of us was a burning waggon on a siding, and beyond it, across the line, lay a derailed truck. It was apparent that the news of De Wet's smashing up was a gross exaggeration, but information was difficult to obtain, till an officer on a trolly came down and ordered our train back to Vredefort Weg. From him we gleaned that Lord Kitchener was about two miles down the railway in Colonel Spens' camp at "Kopjes," with about 1500 men, and that Lord Methuen had a still larger force a few miles farther south. He told us that the engineers had been allowed to work without any covering party, and that while the night shift was busy on the bridge about 2 A.M. a heavy fire was opened on them from all sides at about 300 yards' range. Major Crompton, the well-known electrical engineer,

who was in bed at the time in his carriage, and one or two other officers, had miraculous escapes, the engine, and their carriage which was next it, being literally riddled by bullets. He immediately ordered his men, who were almost all unarmed, to open out at ten yards' interval on either side of the line, whilst those with rifles were placed in the most favourable positions for defence. Most of the black men bolted at once. Lieut. Micklem, R.E., whose extraordinary work under Colonel Girouard throughout this campaign has called forth the army's admiration, was wounded in the foot, and eight others shared a similar fate, while one man was killed. The blacks lost eight killed and twenty-three wounded, and Major Crompton informed me subsequently that they bore their sufferings with the greatest fortitude. It was not till after we returned to Vredefort that the correct casualty list was made up, which showed five killed, thirty wounded, and nearly 400 missing (350 of whom were blacks). Since then, however, the majority have turned up. How the lines of communication should have been left so unguarded was a mystery to

me. It is one of those neglectful oversights which are of such constant occurrence that, small as they may be, are undoubtedly the cause of continued hostilities by giving the burghers that "courage" of which so much has been made by the 'Volksstem' during the war.

The "construction" trains were brought in that night with the wounded and the engineers, many of whom are volunteers from our largest English and colonial firms, and who deserve the greatest sympathy in the undoing of their work by the want of proper military precautions and protection. No wonder they find it heart-breaking labour, these splendid men, without whose skill our forces could never have been in Pretoria, nor have been brought up from the various bases with their enormous and necessitous food and ammunition supplies.

To return to our journey. We had to remain all day at Vredeport Weg, but a convoy came in that evening, and we decided to move on by it if the train could not go next morning. During the day I found Lord Lovat and his scouts, who had just come in from Heilbron. I dined with Lovat in his camp, and heard of

all his ghillies' doings. They haven't seen much fighting, but are a fine lot of men, and know how to use the telescope and how to stalk the foe from their previous experience on the "hull"! The South Wales Borderers were also at Vredefort—altogether about 800 men — but whether the commanding officer here or farther south was to blame for the previous night's incident I thought it better not to inquire!

The train *did* go next morning with an escort of scouts, and so did the convoy at the same time. Some of us elected to go by the latter, but Wester, De Kleen, and myself went on by the train, hoping the work would be quickly completed, and we should reach Rhinoster, or even Kroonstad, that afternoon. Not a bit of it! What was our astonishment and horror to find that, notwithstanding the experiences of the previous night, no guard had been placed over the bridge (which was all but ready for traffic), and that the Boers had deliberately come back during the night and burnt the entire structure down again! Comment on the whole business after my previous

remarks would be superfluous. The spirit of retaliation, at any rate, invaded our men that morning, and we burnt down all the farm-houses in the vicinity of the railway, from which these depredations and guerilla incursions on our communications had undoubtedly been made. After looking at the ruins of the bridge, and eating some breakfast, we espied the convoy coming along; and leaving our bullet-riddled engine behind, we jumped on the waggons and continued our journey by road to Colonel Spens' camp at Rhinoster, which we reached about 1 P.M. that afternoon, Friday, 15th June.

"Kopjes" is just one of those delightfully fortified little camps that one fondly imagines but rarely sees. Of no great height, its position, nevertheless, commands the whole of the surrounding country, especially to the south, east, and west, and it was here the Boers had originally prepared the stronghold from which the unfortunate but gallant Derbyshire militia had been compelled to surrender a few days previously, after suffering severe loss. If I digress from my diary for a minute

it is to tell you that the Derbyshires were detrained at Roodewal late one evening, and formed their camp not 500 yards from this position, which they were unaware was held by the wily Boer. Without any cover whatever, and against six guns, they fought for seven hours with the greatest gallantry; but no one coming to their rescue, they were compelled to surrender, and were then being marched about all over the veldt. It was the day after that Colonel Spens arrived with the Shropshires, four guns, and two companies of the Imperial Yeomanry (the Suffolks and Herts), and took up the position evacuated by the Boers. Lord Kitchener had gone south that very morning to Kroonstad and Bloemfontein, his object being to strengthen and rearrange the posts along the railway—a step which should have been taken far earlier than it was—and I found Colonel Spens in command of the camp. It was nearly ten years since we had last met in the racket courts, but he was more than kind, gave us lunch, and sent us with our kits and mails down to the railhead (the other side of Rhinoster bridge), there

to await a train which was expected from Kroonstad that night.

After lunch, where I found Major Doyle, much altered by his beard, I went across to the Herts Yeomanry camp, where Sir George Arthur failed to recognise me in my prison clothes, and Lord Essex was busy writing a letter. I was delighted to see them, but the fact that I was going home did not cheer anybody very much, and there is little doubt many of our gallant volunteers are heartily sick of the campaign, and anxious to get back home. Here it was I learnt how the Boers had completely wrecked the railway station of Roodewal, and had burned eight waggon-loads of mails for the troops at the front. This latter act was a scoundrelly one, from which no good could accrue to them, but which must cause us the greatest annoyance and disappointment. I have since heard that De Wet's reason for burning the mails was to prevent his burghers reading the private correspondence, which it is said they were doing. I have, however, some doubt as to whether the burghers have had sufficient English education to support with any

strength the reason for De Wet's malicious action. An officer named Watson, however, had a unique piece of luck whilst riding through the veldt, for he found uncharred and unopened an envelope addressed to himself, and containing his own cheque-book!

I said good-bye and went down with the waggon to the railhead, passing on the way Lord Methuen and his force, who were moving up from Roodewal to the destroyed bridge south of Vredefort Road, and reaching the place where the "construction" train from Kroonstad was expected to pull up, found the line and bridges completely smashed and destroyed. Yet I was assured that if proper protection were afforded the engineers, the work would be completed in a couple of days, and communication with Vredefort re-established. If this has been the case it will have been a wonderful bit of engineering, the Spruit at Rhinoster being one of the worst I have yet crossed.

We laid ourselves down about 7 P.M. near the railway for a few hours' nap till the train arrived, and had the satisfaction of knowing that

THE RHENOSTER RIVER DRIFT.

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we were watched over by four companies of the Northamptons. The train came earlier than we expected, and I was roused from my sleep by a voice I knew well. It was one of the defenders of gallant little Mafeking, Lord Charles Bentinck, on his way up to join Ridley's Mounted Infantry, and carrying despatches to Lord Roberts. We gave him a mug of cocoa and some bread, and heard all the news he had to give us.

I got into the engineman's truck, which was already tenanted by two sleepy Scotchmen—the ex-driver and his stoker—but they bade me welcome, and on a stretcher bed, with my rugs piled on me, I slept till five next morning, when we found ourselves at Kroonstad. So far so good! We were still in time to catch the homeward mail, but it was 3 P.M. before we started again for Bloemfontein, in covered and open trucks. Meanwhile I paid a visit to the town—a miserable one, I thought, with a typical Dutch church in the centre of the chief square. I handed in a cable to the 'Daily Mail,' and a message I had been carrying for Mr Maxwell, the 'Standard' correspondent,

and got a shave. Breakfast we had at the refreshment-room—a room full of interesting romance to me, as dinner had been my last meal there under the surveillance of the Orange Free State Government just after my capture, and the proprietor soon recognised me. Here, apparently, most of the officers of the garrison came to breakfast, and among them was a very old friend, Colonel Theodore Brinckman, in command of the 3rd Buffs Militia, Captain Campbell Preston, and Captain Boyd Cunningham, of the Argyll and Sutherland Militia. Brinckman, with his usual kindliness, asked us up to his camp, and there gave me the first bath I had had since Pretoria, and a complete change of underclothing and great-coat, as my Wolseley valise was left behind in the excitement at Vereeniging. We lunched with him also, and nothing could have exceeded his hospitality. It was a curious coincidence that the East Kent Yeomanry, the 2nd Buffs (East Kent regiment), and the Kent volunteers were also encamped all round, and we suggested that the name of Kroonstad should be changed to that of "Kentstad."

Hard by the camp of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was the Scottish Hospital, with its well-known flag defying the vilest sandstorm I have yet encountered in South Africa. I must say the commanding officer of the 3rd Buffs knows how to do a campaign comfortably, his tent being full of every little personal luxury imaginable. Much *aplomb* is due to the smartness and fitness of his regiment, who are credited with having done a very fine march of twenty-three miles from Dewetsdorf with a convoy which the enemy were in search of. We collected more mails, and pursued our southward course, confident our troubles were at an end, and that we should reach Bloemfontein late that Saturday night. The first part of our journey was full of interest, the wonderful deviations and "crib" work over the Walsh river forming a capital diversion in our troublous and long journey. We were stopped at Geneva siding for a passing train, and I got an opportunity of a chat with our engine-driver. His engine was also marked with bullet-holes, and he told me his train had been in the fight two days previously

at Zand river, when on its way up from Bloemfontein. But more of this fight later. From him I gathered that the military authorities have left a quantity of Dutchmen in their positions on the line as stationmasters, signallers, &c.; and the greatest discontent and anxiety was manifested by the drivers—not only for their own personal safety, but also for that of their charges. Here, at this very Geneva siding, was a man whose duty it was to signal in each train by flag. He had not done so in our case, and had been acting-stationmaster for the Boers all through the war. At the next station—Ventersburg Road—was a stationmaster who, I was credibly informed by an eyewitness, sjamboked the refugees from Johannesburg on their way south, when they rushed to get water after an eighteen hours' cramped journey. This man, notwithstanding wires from Bloemfontein to stop the train the night of the fight I have already alluded to, tried all he could to get it on — whether for nefarious reasons or not I am unable to say; but the strongest suspicion rests on him. I have just quoted these two instances in the interests of

the engine-drivers. It is really too bad that, with hundreds of capable loyalists anxious for work, men who are of Dutch origin and known sympathisers with the Boers should be retained in positions of such trust and vital importance.

At Ventersburg Road signs of De Wet's recent visit were not wanting, a huge fan-pump having been thrown right across one of the rails—not ours, fortunately; but when we had gone to bed, hoping to wake at the capital of the Orange River Colony, we were rudely disturbed at Zand river by a voice asking for all our names, occupations, and destinations, and whether we were armed or not. Major Lumley, on General Tucker's staff, who was with us, was called out as senior officer to go and see the commandant of the station. We wondered much what was up. He came back with the news that we could not proceed that night, and that an attack was expected by Colonel Capper of the Pioneers, who was acting-commandant. Possibly, if all went well, we might be allowed to proceed after the mounted infantry had cleared the country in the morning. Here was a nuisance, and many were the speculations as

way up. We crossed, too, the great Modder river by means of the "deviation"—truly a magnificent piece of work—and in bidding farewell to one of the most interesting bits of the country, I could only do so with relief when I noted the whole way down the traces and results of our great British army's northward march. I found piles of letters at the club at Bloemfontein, had a chat with Lord Kitchener and General Wavell, who were both going north that night, slept in a dirty, uncomfortable hotel, called the Royal, and left Bloemfontein gladly behind me yesterday morning at 10 A.M., the first direct traveller from Pretoria to London, with nothing but visions of "Home, Sweet Home!" before me.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IDLE REFLECTIONS.

INFORMATION WANTED—SPION KOP—IN DEFENCE OF COLONEL THORNEYCROFT — SANNAH'S POST DISASTER AND CONSEQUENCES—MOSAR'S HOEK DISASTER, REDDERSBURG—WHO IS TO BLAME?—THE SIEGE OF WEPENER—WHY SO LATE IN THE TRANSVAAL—GENERAL FRENCH—IN FUTURE—THE R.A.M.C. — OUR TRANSPORT SERVICE AND ENGINEERS — BRILLIANCE OF OUR COLONIALS — A QUESTIONABLE ADVANCE—OUR FUTURE POLICY—CONCILIATION AND JUSTICE —REBELS AND WARRIORS—A SUGGESTION.

June 25.—If in the preceding chapters I have dealt with my own personal adventures during the Boer war, I have done so more under compulsion than of my own free will, since the varied episodes of my six months in South Africa have been compiled from heterogeneous experiences, and not from continual contact with the two great forces which have success-

fully invaded the enemies' country. Still, I have not been so wrapt up in myself as to have been unable to note from time to time the general *entourage* of the war, and it is more to give an aspect of realism to what has appeared like a fairy tale than to keep for future reference deeds and misdeeds which must ever remain green in my own memory, that "idle reflections" on the campaign form the concluding chapter of my book. The peace of a smooth passage on the Tantallon Castle has given me time to collect my scattered senses, and to write calmly on all I have seen and heard since I left England in January; and though it is better to believe half one hears, especially in matters military, any remarks of criticism I may make are jotted down in the general interest, and in the knowledge that a servant of a leading newspaper is no servant if he does not speak straightforwardly and honestly according to his own unbiassed opinions, and for the benefit of the great British public.

The cause of the war, and the original disposition of our troops in Natal at its commence-

ment, I shall leave to the political and military wranglers to thresh out; nor do I intend—with the one exception of Spion Kop—to criticise our early failures. I only touch on this never-to-be-forgotten disaster because, having subsequently joined Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, and been on patrol for ten days under that mountain and in its immediate vicinity, I have been able to see the country myself and to glean not only the regiment's opinion on the subject, but also that of many other interested and disinterested participators. There is little doubt that the key to the relief of Ladysmith was by the Acton Homes road, and once inserted into the lock of Spion Kop, there was nothing more to do but turn it in the right direction—to outflank and cut off the blockaders, and also the large force which was disputing our advance over the Tugela. Van Reenen's, Besuidenhuit's, the Koodoo, and Olivier's Hoek Passes would all have been ours, and the Boers' only means of retreat would have been by rail *vid* Elandslaagte. Why the hill was not held after it had been *partially* captured (it was never completely in our posses-

sion) has been the subject of much controversy and difference of opinion, but in no account have I heard mention of a thick fog which overhung the hill (and often does overhang it) on the fatal night. The publication of the various commanders' despatches, in my opinion out of place at that period of the war, and Lord Roberts's stringent and severe comment, rendered Sir Redvers Buller's position as untenable as Sir Charles Warren's or Colonel Thorneycroft's. When one strikes at an evil, one must strike at the root: and if in this instance the root was the officer commanding the Natal forces, surely there was some one who could have succeeded him in the command, or he himself have been spared the ignominy of the Commander-in-Chief's, no doubt just, censure. The real fact is that General Buller was miles away from the scene of the battle. For that there is no excuse. In the second place, Sir Charles Warren, instead of forcing the fighting on the right of the Boer position (north of the Acton Homes road), hardly engaged them at all. Lastly, the "unwarrantable assumption of responsibility" by

Colonel Thorneycroft, when General Woodgate had been mortally wounded, was not unwarrantable. It was authorised by Sir Redvers Buller, and Colonel Thorneycroft was ordered to use his own discretion as to a retirement. What did he do? He retired after suffering terrible loss. He had no guns, and he could not get his reinforcements. That Colonel Thorneycroft will try and clear himself from Lord Roberts's imputation is more than doubtful, but if he does, he and many others will unfold a tale about a certain officer which, for the present, had better be left untold. The gallantry of Colonel Thorneycroft has hardly been recognised. His successful night-march when he led the brigade (which no one else would lead) to the exact spot and at the exact minute, and the triumph of the night surprise, have surely deserved more prominent mention. What we want to know is, where was Sir Redvers Buller, whose absence from the scene of operations — at any rate, from the scene of the main attack—has never yet been clearly explained?

The disasters at Sannah's Post and Mosar's

Hoek (near Reddersburg), coupled with the great failure of the war—viz., the unsuccessful attempt to cut off Christian de Wet when he was attacking Wepener—are the only three individual items of mismanagement, or want of judgment, I intend to touch upon, though my imprisonment in Pretoria has led me to hope that a searching inquiry will be made into the Talana Hill and Nicholson's Nek fiascos, if only to clear some of the unfortunate victims' characters. The loss of guns, convoy, and prisoners at Sannah's Post by means of a cleverly devised ambush has been the subject of much interest to me since I had the opportunity of hearing Christian de Wet's own version of his success, besides that of most of the imprisoned officers. It would appear from newspaper reports that the affair has been magnified into a brilliant extrication from an unfortunate position by General Broadwood, instead of being condemned as a gross piece of carelessness on somebody's part. Whose fault it was the Commander-in-Chief himself probably knows; yet no blame seems to attach to any of the commanding officers concerned,

but rather Victoria crosses and high eulogies for valour, discipline, and generalship have been substituted.

What was the position? General Broadwood felt compelled to evacuate Thaba Nchu in face of a grossly exaggerated report of a probable attack by overwhelming forces. He therefore retired on Sannah's Post, where a small detachment was protecting the waterworks. There is a rumour prevalent that General Broadwood asked twice for reinforcements, which were not forthcoming, and that on being summoned by the Commander-in-Chief the whole matter was hushed up, because General Broadwood faced up to Lords Kitchener and Roberts and attributed neglect to them. To revert to the disaster itself—the force, having marched into the little standing camp, started next morning to cross this dangerous spruit without an advance-guard of any kind! The assumption was that the detachment which General Broadwood joined must have had its outposts, and that the line of march was perfectly clear of the enemy, the only danger being to the rear. There are three questions requiring answers:

Were outposts or vedettes properly posted? did General Broadwood inquire into this before marching? and why was there no advance-guard? As every one knows, baggage-waggons, Cape-carts, and Scotch carts were at the head of the retiring column, and were followed by the artillery all limbered up, so that De Wet with 375 men had the British force at his mercy. His own story, through his interpreter, is interesting enough. He told it me a few days later, when I was taken prisoner at Reddersburg. "I could have taken every man," he said, "but for a foolish mistake on my part to avoid bloodshed. When the convoy and some of the guns had passed through, and I had made several prisoners without firing a shot, I told an officer to ride back to the General and tell him to surrender, as he was surrounded. He (Major Taylor) galloped back, and in a moment the whole British cavalry and mounted infantry turned about and bolted to the south, leaving me to deal only with the guns and artillery-men, and some mounted infantry (Roberts's Horse) who tried to cover the retreat." I asked De Wet what

force he had? He told me he had 375 men in the ambush, and about 1500 men on the right flank or to the north of the British troops in the direction they were marching. On our side it is said there were at least 8000 or 10,000 Boers. That is ridiculous. A force of about 5000 men was in the neighbourhood of Ladybrand, but quite fifteen miles away, and our guns and prisoners fell into the hands of a commando which was scarcely 500 stronger numerically than our own. Moreover, at a distance of about four miles, Colonel Martyr had a brigade of mounted infantry. What was that brigade doing? and why did it not come to the rescue? Nor was it pleasant to hear aspersions cast on the fighting qualities of the 10th Hussars and composite regiment, who are reported to have deserted the guns in their mad flight to such an extent that an officer remarked that he hoped the 10th Hussars would never again be detailed to escort his guns! Can it be possible? I trust that information on these points will be forthcoming in order to refute the well-circulated story that the whole affair has been hushed up.

The seriousness of the above disaster lay not so much in our actual losses as in the "fillip" it gave to a hesitating foe. It was the night after the disaster that I crossed through the Boer lines at Loeew river (related in a previous chapter) from Maseru, and the following day, April 2, I was a prisoner in the Boer camp. There the elation at their victory was enormous. "One killed, two wounded," was reported on the Boer side! That number, however, is the average allowed per battle by the Transvaal Government! It was here I learnt the entire plans for cutting off another British detachment in the neighbourhood of Reddersburg, which, fully related in chap. xvi., brings me to reflection number 2. Who is to blame for the Mosar's Hoek, or, as it is better known, Reddersburg disaster on April 3 and 4? I had the effrontery, when I was for a second time made prisoner after that battle, to telegraph to Lord Roberts and to the 'Cape Times,' neither of which telegrams were probably sent by the Orange Free State Government, that "the Royal Irish Rifles fought gallantly

for twenty-four hours against overwhelming odds, and without guns, and that no disgrace could attach to them, but that it was entirely General Gatacre's fault." In this case it was quite a privilege to me to be an unwilling but solitary correspondent. The story of how I arrived on the scene after my escape from the Boer camp need not again be entered into. The true facts of how this detachment found itself in its precarious position are as follows, and have been related to me by an officer, forming part of his report:—

The three companies of the Royal Irish Rifles left Smithfield, March 29, for Dewetsdorf, where, on April 1, they were *unexpectedly* joined by two companies of mounted infantry from Springfontein. No orders as to what the three companies of the Royal Irish Rifles were to do at Dewtesdorf were issued. The two companies of the mounted infantry were so unexpected, that when they made their appearance at dusk on Sunday evening they ran the greatest danger of being fired on by the detachment of Royal Irish Rifles, who had that afternoon driven in a picket of the enemy. During the afternoon the officer commanding wired to the Assistant Adjutant-General, 3rd Division, that a

few shots had been exchanged, and rumours existed that a commando had been invited to rescue Dewetsdorf from the British. In answer to this, at 3.30 A.M. on the morning of 2nd April, an order to remove the troops to Reddersburg immediately was received. The column accordingly left at 5 A.M. in a pelting shower. Owing to the state of the roads, the exhausted condition of the draught animals and of the mounted infantry cobs, the progress of the column was very slow. Three of the latter actually died before 10 o'clock that morning. During the afternoon several men were noticed on some kopjes to the north of the road, and by the time a reconnaissance had been made the sun was setting. The column halted for the night at Peter Kelly's farm, leaving again at dawn next day. At about 10 A.M. a cloud of dust was reported from the north, &c.

From the above statement it will be seen that no warning of danger had been issued from the Assistant Adjutant-General, 3rd Division, but suspicions had only been aroused by contact with a Boer patrol on April 1 and the sight of figures on kopjes on April 2. The history of the fight, related in another chapter, would have been fully told at an earlier date but for my imprisonment. The arrival of the British troops in Pretoria at once set agoing

such gossipy exaggerations as to the true reason of the surrender that, in the interests of the Royal Irish Rifles, I feel compelled to again draw attention to chap. xvi., in the hope of eliciting some explanation. It would be interesting to know: (1) What was such a detachment doing between Dewetsdorf and Reddersburg, without a gun of any sort, and without any orders for duty to perform or warning of impending danger? (2) Where were its supports? (3) By whose authority was it brought into the trap? (4) Could the commanding officer, Captain M'Whinnie of the Royal Irish Rifles, have avoided surrender? It is impossible for me to answer the first question. The only thing I can recognise is that it was wrong—fundamentally wrong—to allow a force of such size (less than 500 men) to move in flank march through a notoriously hostile country, without any aim or object, miles from any supports, and without a gun. The second question has still to be answered. There was a small force at Eden-[redacted], about twelve miles distant by road; [redacted]tro (not many) at Smithfield and

Helvetia, still farther away. Bloemfontein, thirty-five miles distant to the north, and Springfontein, quite as far to the south, were the only headquarters which could really afford to send reinforcements if necessary. To find a satisfactory solution to query No. 3 is difficult. I thought General Gatacre, of whose division this little force formed a detachment, and by whom it was originally sent out from Springfontein, was the cause. I said so in my telegram to Lord Roberts and the 'Cape Times.' We all believed it. The occupation of Pretoria has introduced me to one of that General's staff, Captain M'Neill, of Montmorency's Scouts, who denies that any such orders were given by General Gatacre. Further, I understand that General Gatacre has been retired (probably on this account, as he went directly afterwards), but that he has gone home armed with certain telegrams and will demand an inquiry. If I have wronged him, I regret it exceedingly. On the other hand, another version of the affair reaches me that General Gatacre asked Lord Roberts's permission to move this detachment, and moved it without waiting for Lord

Roberts's reply, which subsequently arrived forbidding it! What is one to believe?

I can answer the fourth question myself boldly and fearlessly. I had no interests in the little force. Rather had I cause to blame them for my capture, and for themselves opening fire on me when I drove into the battle in my Cape-cart! But when I heard at Pretoria that the Royal Irish Rifles "chucked" it; that they had no water; that they had no food; that their ammunition had given out; and that the white flag was hoisted by an irresponsible person, it is time that the only civilian except the Wesleyan minister and the black boys should have his say in defence of the Irishmen. In short, the Royal Irish Rifles and the few mounted infantry of the 5th Fusiliers fought splendidly: they had certainly had their last drop of water that morning, but men do not die of thirst within five hours of getting it; there was at least a ration per man in the transport waggons; they had plenty of ammunition to hold out all day; and if the white flag was hoisted originally by an unauthorised person, no surrender was made till eventualities pointed to a massacre, and the

commanding officer himself held up his handkerchief. What did happen happened this way. The mounted infantry on the westernmost spur of the position (who had borne the brunt of the fighting the previous day and lost *inter alia* nearly all their officers) were rushed in the morning by some Boers who, during the night, had succeeded in concealing themselves under a ridge immediately below the position. It was on this spur (*vide* map, p. 243) the white flag was originally hoisted, and the Boers immediately began, from their newly acquired position at about 300 yards' range, enfilading those who were in the centre (and absolutely unable to fire in their direction from the formation of the kopje), and, missing us, the bullets found their billet in the backs of the men who were guarding the easternmost spur. In the last twenty minutes, as Captain Temple Smyth, R.A.M.C., told me, we had twenty-four casualties, and then, when a second white flag was hoisted (this time on the easternmost spur), Captain M'Whinnie, whose calmness and almost heroic energy were the subject of universal comment, recognised the hopelessness of the case,

and himself held out the signal of surrender. Our casualties were about fifty, but remember that the previous night they were but eight, and we only fought three hours on the second day and lost twenty men in the last twenty-four minutes! The question of cutting our way through has been dealt with elsewhere: the question of leaving our transport before the fight began has also been touched on. The commanding officer had no information of the enemy's strength to justify him in doing the latter; he would, in my opinion, have been equally unjustified had he attempted to cut his way out to Reddersburg during the night—*because* our loss would have been probably enormous—*because* he had nothing that he knew of to gain if he did so—and *because* he felt certain that reinforcements would be forthcoming.

There is a curious tale afloat about the proximity of reinforcements, and the hearing of the last shell fired and then complete silence. It is said these reinforcements were close to Reddersburg—five miles distant! All I can say is, that had they come on they could have

rescued us all. De Wet went off at once towards Edenburg—"to cut off another party," he said; and we were left within two miles of the battlefield for at least two hours, and spent the first night of our captivity at a farm not six miles distant, with only seventy or eighty men to guard us! Why did not the reinforcements come on? Shall we ever know if General Gatacre or Lord Roberts, or neither, were to blame for the isolation of this little gunless force?

And now for the last exposure of our weak generalship — what else can I call it? You will remember that almost immediately after the Sannah's Post and Reddersburg reverses Colonel Dalgety's force at Wepener was the subject of Christian de Wet's attention, and a somewhat protracted siege, coupled with the lying versions of the affair supplied us through the 'Volksstem,' gave rise to a feeling of anxiety that a third calamity on the Basutoland frontier was about to befall the British arms. The news that relief columns were on the move from the south and from the west towards Wepener and [illegible]rf respec-

tively, and that a third had occupied Thaba Nchu, made me write the few lines I did on the subject in chap. xxi., from within my prison walls in Pretoria. It was quite apparent to the world at large who knew anything about the configuration of the country, and the curious position of Wepener on the Caledon river, that De Wet had either made a mistake himself or the trap had been cunningly laid for him by the British Commander-in-Chief. There could be no escape for him with the Caledon river on the east frowningly refusing him permission to cross into the neutral territory of Basutoland. Yet he did escape! He escaped by trekking—trekking—trekking for three hard days (I met one of his commando in Pretoria), and three British divisions had the mortification of finding that they had been outwitted by one of the most cunning and volatile of Boer leaders. What has been the result? Christian de Wet, as I left, was breaking up our lines of communications, riding daringly through the eastern Free State, picking up detachments and even brigades of our militia and yeomen, and all

because our generals were not sharp enough to close the door of the mouse-trap which had been so cleverly baited and prepared after the two previous reverses by Lord Roberts in the month of April.

Just a few more idle reflections. Was not the relief of Ladysmith effected by the relief of Kimberley and the surrendering of Cronje at Paardeberg? The last fight at Pieters, which almost ended in a retirement in the face of no enemy, was nothing but a necessary waste of ammunition. The next day, without a shot being fired, the road to Ladysmith would have been (as it was) open, so fine a rearguard action did the Boers fight during the previous fortnight, so long did we delay in our movements. One word more on this subject. We only arrived in the nick of time to save Sir George White and his troops. Starvation, unhealthiness, and consequent ravages by fever and scurvy were hard at work. Five hundred were buried in the month of February, and, judging by the absence of medicines and necessary diet, that number would have been doubled in March. Mafeking seems, by report, to have

quite another story to tell. Thousands of sheep, hundreds of oxen! Yet the all-foreseeing B.-P. gave his men horse-flesh to eat! I wonder which was the greater defence in the opinion of the authorities who know? From statements received, and personal observation in one case, the fall of Ladysmith was as hourly expected as the surrender of Mafeking was as distantly anticipated.

When I left Pretoria the general question was, "Where is Buller?" To his credit let it here be said, that the interruption in the telegraphic system for a whole week culminated in the news that he was through Laing's Nek: some said he was at Vrede, others at Volksrust. He could have been at either—his forces might have been at both. But why *after* Pretoria had been occupied? I am sorry to suggest it, but I cannot but feel that very serious friction has existed between Lord Roberts and Sir Redvers Buller since the former set foot in South Africa. In justice to General Buller, he has had by far the hardest country to fight in —in some cases impregnable,—but his constant withdrawals during the relief of Ladysmith, and

his subsequent inaction in coming through to help Lord Roberts, point to an unnerved man, whose great strength of tenacity has been severely shaken by his previous losses. That his forces were not strong enough may be urged in his favour; but he could have had all he asked for, and the chief topic of conversation in Pretoria was undoubtedly the absence of General Buller from the seat of operations. Middelburg was where he ought to have been when Lord Roberts entered Pretoria, and the battle of Eerste Fabrieken need then never have been fought.

How the army gossips, and how eager we "men of the pen" seize on any subject of controversy! Here am I now coming to the subject of a man I scarcely know, and suggesting that General French's detractors are merely jealous of his success; for there is no need to hide the fact that the failure of the cavalry in this war, and of General French in consequence, has been an important topic in military circles both at home and on the field of battle. You will remember how, among all our early failures, his name alone was held up as the successful gen-

eral. If you had been in South Africa you would have heard it said that his Brigade-Major, Haig of the 7th Hussars, had done it all. Be merciful! be gentle! be fair! Remember the fitness and freshness of his horses at the commencement of the campaign. Remember, too, the work he had to do in the worst season for horses in South Africa, and how in consequence he was severely handicapped. I prefer to rely on the words of the Swedish military attaché, an unbiassed and eminent critic, who has seen war in America and war on the Turko-Greek frontier, and who says that General French has done splendidly. One word about him. I am told that he performed, altogether unnoticed by the press, a brilliant feat at the Modder river, before the relief of Kimberley. He crossed the Klip Drift, charged between the two strong positions from which the passage of the drift had been endangered, and completely upset the Boer plan of operations with comparatively slight loss to his own force.

Certainly we have failed signally in cutting off our retreating foe, but to the dearth of horses and the weakness of those available may

be also attributed in additional mitigation f
extraordinary mobility of the Boer force. T
Boers have never "stood" since Cronje's s
render, and in their retreats have consequen
never blocked each other's means of escap
Moreover, they carry probably less than h
the accoutrements and equipments with wh
we burden our horses, and they have t
advantage in knowing the country and h
to treat their ponies, which we have ne
yet mastered.

The day for cavalry is at an end except
scouting purposes. Frontal attacks are thi
of the past. Every attack will have in
future to be completed by a turning movem
Mobility will then be the essence of suc
We must have a force, and a large one
mounted infantry. They must be mou
on strong, hardy cobs or ponies, and t
equipment or accoutrements must be red
to a minimum weight.

As regards our artillery, it is easy to m
comparisons and to forget to make allowan
There is no doubt that the Boer guns
magnificently served and of the latest pat

at we have little authentic information to go upon as to the utility and success of our own weapons. Some say ours were outmatched, others say that lyddite, like the pom-pom, has rather a moral than a deadly effect. One thing I believe is certain, that our mountain batteries are ineffective when the enemy could bring their artillery against us. The naval guns have played a prominent part in this war, thanks to Captain Hedworth Lambton, C.B., and Captain Scott, C.B.; nor have individual acts of heroism, such as Colonel Bullock's and the officers and men of Q Battery at Sannah's Post, been in-conspicuous.

Full stop to criticism! perhaps 'tis as well. Now that the success of our arms is assured, little good can accrue by the washing of dirty linen. Still, out of wrong may come right, and victims may yet become heroes, and heroes victims, if the truth is told impartially to the world in general.

Of the R.A.M.C. in the field I know very little. The organisation of Netley seemed very complete, and [illegible] I [illegible] been [illegible] in the [illegible] of [illegible].

for I shudder when I remember the thousands of tents all crowded with fever-stricken and wounded patients which I left whitening the country round Bloemfontein. In a war which has shown the world an army of the bravest and never-to-be-denied soldiers, it would be inglorious to select any branch for special mention; but I cannot conclude this part of my summary without a word of praise for both our Transport and Supply arrangements, and the brilliant work of every branch of our Engineer force. The system of making "deviations" in place of repairing demolished bridges has been one of the wonders of the war, just as the marching capacity of our infantry has been splendidly exemplified. I was talking to the Turkish military attaché at Pretoria, and asking him what he thought of the fighting. He told me his greatest pleasure and interest had been at our wonderful service of supplies. As for the fighting capacity of the Boers, he summed it up very cleverly when he said: "Le Boer se batte lâchement. Il se cache comme un renard, et il court comme un lièvre!" To our Allies (I write as a Britisher)

we owe an enormous meed of praise for their zeal and military excellence, — not so much perhaps to the South African Colonials as to those who have come from distant dependencies, especially Canada and Australia. The South Africans have done their duty magnificently, from a knowledge of danger to their interests and loyalty to their mother country. But nowhere will the Colonial losses be more deplored, nor services more highly appreciated, than in the country which practically gave them birth, and which, through the wise and brilliant reign of a beloved Queen, has allowed them the opportunity of manifesting the advantages of our system of self-government, and their devotion to those from whom it was received.

The advance of the British army, checked temporarily by the early failures of the war, was carried out by Lord Roberts, according to the original plan of Sir Redvers Buller, with masterly effect. The supersession of the original commander-in-chief by the appointment of a field-marshal could reflect at that time no discredit on Sir Redvers Buller's arrangements, but was in itself a necessity, owing to the great

area of occupation. What mistakes Sir Redvers Buller and his generals made were soon discounted by Lord Roberts, who was able to profit by them. When he advanced he advanced quickly, and no possible counter-movement was unconsidered. Herein has lain his success. His delays, irksome as they may have been to those at home as well as to those at the front, were as necessary for the further successful development of his plan of operations as food is for a horse, and meat, clothing, and rest for the troops. Tactics are of a variety of colour, and I dare hardly here enter on a discussion which might fill a book as to the wisdom of the hurried march from Bloemfontein over the Vaal to Pretoria by means of the railway, which so far succeeded in its object as to conquer the Transvaal capital as well as the Golden City, but at the expense of leaving the right wing a long way in the rear to contend with a very hostile portion of the Orange River Colony. There is a grave responsibility attaching to this manœuvre, and inasmuch as the early captures of Ladybrand, Dewetsdorf, Wepener, and Thaba Nchu, and their subsequent surrender to

the Boer forces, taught us, or should have taught us, the lesson that precipitate and unconsidered action may cause us serious consequences, I earnestly hope that the arrival of this ship in British port will dispel the anxiety I entertain as to the safety of Heilbron, Ficksburg, Harrismith, Ladybrand, Winburg, and other places on the lines of communication. Our enormous forces must conquer in the end, and the end is very near; but just as Général Buller's tardy arrival in the Transvaal has been a subject of general comment, and possibly prolonged warfare, owing to our unfortunate prisoners at Machadodorp, so too may Lord Roberts's splendid and direct march on the seat of government lose much of its *aplomb* by the slowness and apparent impotence of our forces in the east of the Free State to deal with the now admittedly clever and mobile General Christian de Wet.

However, I may pass in the darkness of the unconscious to another subject, and with the assumption that peace has been declared, that President Kruger and his Government, scoundrels of the deepest dye, have disappeared

either from the country, or at any rate from public notice, let us reflect for one moment on the future. What our policy is to be we have heard from London. The Transvaal and Orange Free State Governments have ceased to exist. Under new titles, our new possessions become dependent on, and colonies of, the British Government. So far so good. But how is the country to be ruled if the interests of the Dutch are to be kept on an equal footing with the British, and if the black population, which is no inconsiderable one, is to receive fairer treatment than it has been accustomed to under the Boer Government? The very fact of there being such a thing as a black man is detrimental to the interests of the white emigrant labourer, yet necessary in the interests of civilisation. Just as the cheapest and best labour at home finds the readiest market, so too will it be found in South Africa. Where the black man can live on 10s. a-week, the white man will require 20s., and he will not be able to undergo the heat of the noonday sun as the Kaffir has been born to accustom himself to. Therefore, ye English emigrants to

our new possessions, be careful before ye venture over this vast tract of sea, lest ye be disappointed! I have met men of all grades, and I have seen sorrow depicted on many of their faces. Yet the man of skill and ability, the man with the least fearful character and greatest bull-dog tenacity, will undoubtedly make his mark. The Kaffir will reap the chief benefit from the British occupation, and the only doubt I have is whether he will profit and improve by the absence of the Boer lash!

As I reflect, I am reminded that on board the ship on which I write is a party of Dutch farmers and a young English agitator, who pose as being on a homeward mission of pro-Boer conciliation. What their line of action will be I can scarcely prognosticate, but before the voyage is over I may have gleaned some details of their intention. Conciliation is all very well—I am entirely in favour of it—but for Bond representatives to come whining at this hour of the day for a crust of bread is like the whipped bully lying as to the cause of his treatment. Insult will be added to injury if any official notice is taken of this deputation; and

though most of them have names which savour of foreign nationalities, yet they describe themselves as Dutch farmers and British subjects. The young man among them is of English extraction and of Harrovian education.

And what about Conciliation? From the extreme leniency with which we, as soldiers, have treated the person and property of our foe, from the general desire for pacification which we, as diplomatists, have shown from the commencement of hostilities, the word conciliation is evidently intended to be the main plank in our platform in what is now known as the Settlement. But we must not conciliate in a way which will prove detrimental to Justice. In this word lies wrapt the whole crux of the situation. The Britisher, the Volunteer, the Colonial, and, more than all, the Dutchman and loyal subject, must be considered. Not only must he be considered, but he must be compensated. No considerations of gold or diamond mines must damp the quick and thorough recompense for those who have served their country and suffered through the losses of the war. Colonial and loyalist first, millionaire

afterwards. Moreover, the position of the British taxpayer must not be overlooked. The war was forced on us. We had to defend or lose our possessions, and we did the right thing. Leave the Uitlander question out of sight. I hate the subject. It has been exaggerated. Deal only with Kruger as an impossible negotiator. Have no sympathy with the Hollander, but maintain the seat of Government at Pretoria. Lend a helpful hand to the dopper Boer. Do all these under a tactful governor, and the great death-roll of 1899-1900 will not have been entirely unjustifiable. On the other hand, leave it to chance, and take the advice of the money-grubber, and England's prestige will have been lost for ever. The country can pay six millions per annum without feeling it. Therefore conciliate, and do not conciliate from Downing Street. As time smoothes sorrow, so when you and I are old men we will find that satisfaction will be the offspring of sorrow, and that the poor uneducated Boer will have learnt to realise the swindle of his previous Government and to enjoy the *contentment of the British rule.*

One word more on matters political in South Africa. The rebel in Cape Colony and Natal is in a different position to the Free Staters and Transvaal Boers who have fought as warriors would fight for the independence of their country. Rightly or wrongly, these latter have but done what any other country's soldiers would do who were ordered to occupy the field. Wrongly they invaded our possessions, but the blame for this lies with the Kruger-Steyn Government, and not with the men themselves. Not so the rebels. British subjects all, they have dared to raise their arm against their Queen, and justly have they deserved death. But be it to our credit as a merciful and just nation that we do not exact the extreme penalty which treason demands. In many cases extenuating circumstances may be urged, such as the fact of the Boer invasion, and their consequent compulsion to fight or be shot. They had no protection at first, and though it can hardly be called an extenuating circumstance, the fact that many were Dutchmen born in the colony, and had therefore no oath of allegiance to take, may weigh in their favour. Personally, I have little

sympathy for them. The chances of possible aggrandisement and their well-known racial hatred, coupled with the irritation of the Bond preachings, cannot mitigate their action. To the loyalists who have suffered, their loyalty, though it was a duty, will not go unnoticed. But to those who have been caught red-handed, or who have come back like erring sheep to beg for mercy, justice must be done; and as the eventual settlement is certain to tax the resources of the cleverest diplomatist if further bloodshed in South Africa is to be averted, I would for a moment draw attention to the present and possible future constitution of our courts.

When I was in prison, I heard that the Lord Chief-Justice was on his way to preside over a specially constituted court for the trial of these rebels. He had not arrived when I left Cape Town, and several sentences of imprisonment and fines had already been meted out. I do not challenge the rightness of these sentences, nor the correctness of the convictions; but the political opponents in the Cape Colony are trying to make capital out of the constitu-

tion and action of the courts. To satisfy them, to satisfy ourselves, to satisfy everybody, we should immediately constitute a special judge and jury who should, if possible, have no connection with South African affairs. The appointment of the Lord Chief-Justice would be enormously popular, and would dispel any anxiety from our minds that men are being arrested, convicted, and sentenced by juries who, from the serious outcome of the rebellion, are, or possibly might be, prejudiced by either personal or political motives. "Eendracht maakt macht" was the motto of the Transvaal; "Union is strength" is one of our great principles, and to attain it we must, now and immediately, give justice to all. If, too, in the quelling of rebellious warfare in the Free State and Transvaal we are going to recognise the international principle, as Lord Roberts has done by his proclamation in May, that a capital of a country, once taken, constitutes that country the possession of the victor, and that men who still fight are considered rebels, we shall find ourselves face to face with still greater trouble. The principle is [illegible]ng—must

be wrong; and I earnestly trust that the extreme penalty for the continuation of hostilities in the Free State will not be enforced on those who are now giving our forces the greatest difficulty in their subjugation. *Vivat* South Africa! God save the Queen!

THE END.

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